

ISSUE

59

APRIL-MAY 2015

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**FLORENTINE
PORK CHOPS**
page 111



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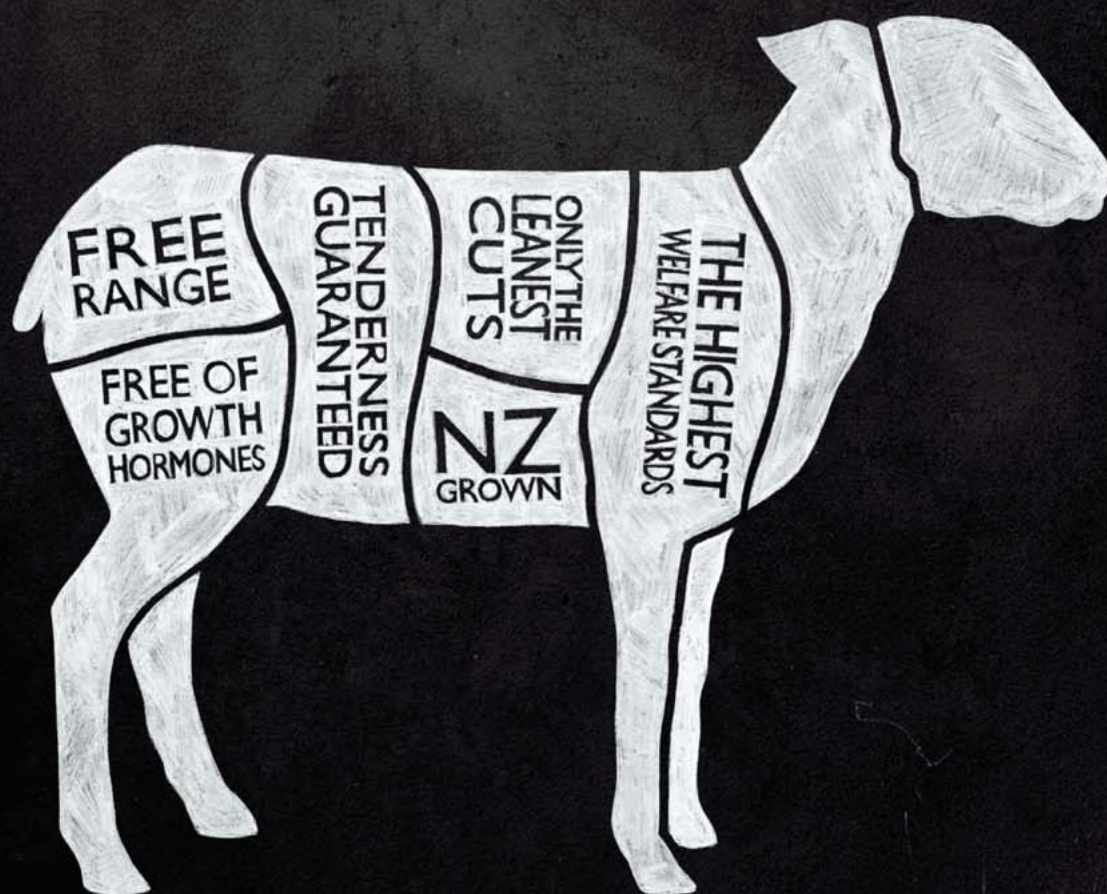
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DISH MAGAZINE



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If you're anything like me, one of your stand-by dinner favourites involves pasta. Short on time – and possibly ingredients to hand – pasta is the base of many a delicious and satisfying meal. Just add sauce – starring whatever medley of seasonal vegetables and herbs is your preference – and *buon appetito!*

It's this manner of using ingredients simply and while they're at their best that is key to Italian cooking and lies at the heart of its enduring appeal. In this issue we celebrate the best of Italian food with recipes that are sure to inspire and we meet locals who are putting their own spin on Italian favourites here in New Zealand.

Food Editor Claire Aldous has embraced the theme with an array of delectable Italian-inspired dishes: it's the time of year to make the most of abundant, seasonal fare; and then from Gorgonzola to ricotta, Italian cheese is the core component in sweet and savoury recipes, and with Mother's Day and Easter upon us there are plenty of opportunities to gather around the table with family and friends. Claire's menu ideas for a fabulous long lunch will keep guests lingering at the table well into the afternoon.

Pasta, risotto and polenta are Italian pantry staples. Food writer Sarah Tuck, inspired by a trip of a lifetime through Italy last year, revisits some of her favourite food memories from her travels with recipes that feature these versatile ingredients. If you have difficulty determining your farfalle from your fusilli, Deputy Editor Alice Galletly's guide to pasta cuts and the perfect sauce to pair with them will prove to be a useful reference to keep to hand.

We also stop by Wellington's popular eatery, Ombra, to experience a slice of Venetian life and meet an Auckland pastry chef who is putting her own twist on a classic Italian treat.

Enjoy,

Lisa

Lisa Morton, *Editor*
LISA@DISH.CO.NZ

farro

FRESH FOOD



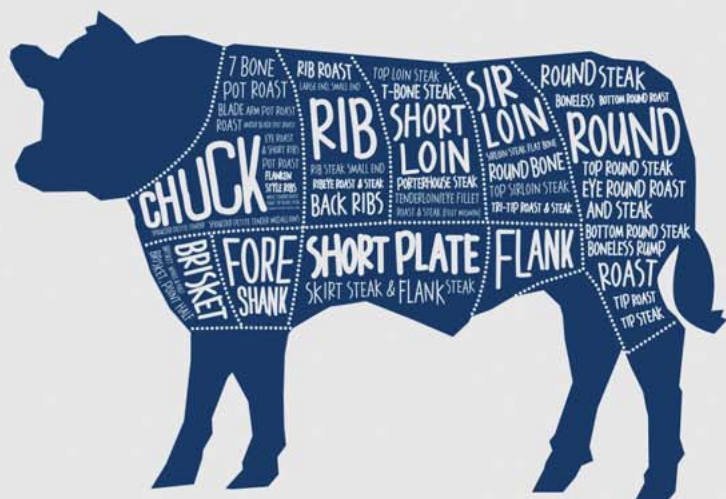
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— 2015 —
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What's new, news and necessary for your kitchen

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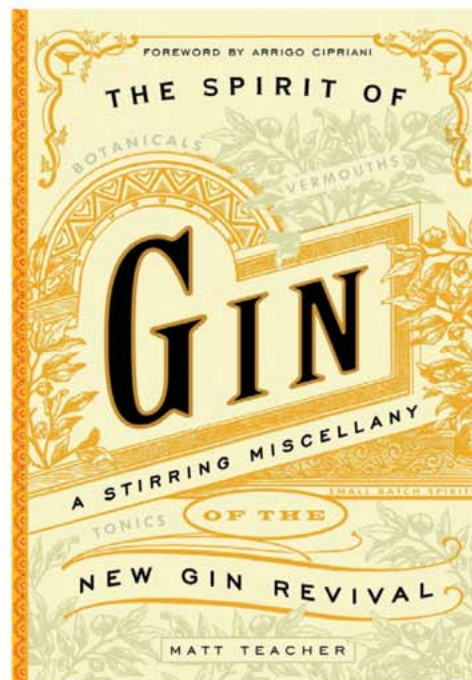
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: General Eclectic Small Canister in Jade (\$16.90), LeeAnn Yare Wide Canister in White/Turquoise (\$22.90) and General Eclectic Wide Canister in Yellow (\$32.90) from Iko Iko (www.ikoiko.co.nz). Established and Sons Store in White/Medium (\$156) from Simon James Concept Store (www.simonjamesdesign.com). General Eclectic Small Canister in Aqua Triangle (\$21.90), Small Canister in Coral (\$17.90), Large Canister in Yellow (\$21.90) from The Homestore (www.thehomestoreonline.co.nz). Typh Imp Canister in Diamond (\$24.90) from The Homestore (x2). General Eclectic Small Canister in Coral (\$17.90), Large Canister in Jade (\$21.90) from The Homestore. Established and Sons Store in Yellow/Small (\$156) from Simon James Concept Store. General Eclectic Large Canister in Coral (\$21.90), Small Canister in Jade (\$17.90), Typh Imp Canister in Large Scale (\$29.90) from The Homestore. General Eclectic Small Canister in Diamonds (\$16.90) from Iko Iko.

SIDE DISHES



A TOUCH OF PARIS

We're coveting the new Winter 2015 collection, 'Deco Deco' from Citta Design. Inspired by the thinkers, drinkers, dancers and painters of Paris in the 1920s (think Gertrude Stein, Coco Chanel and Picasso), it pulls together graphic prints, painterly palettes and plenty of monochromatic glamour. To shop the collection, visit www.cittadesign.com



RAISE A GLASS

Lovers of gin and beautiful books (that's everyone, right?): this is for you. The Spirit of Gin by Matt Teacher explores the recent gin revival in America and across the globe, covering everything from its colourful history to classic cocktail recipes, ingredients, distilling methods and more. Available from Flotsam and Jetsam www.flotsamandjetsam.co.nz



FEEL THE HEAT

Elegant Scandinavian design meets impressive functionality in the New Norm Kettle Thermos Jug by Menu. The 1 litre jug, which is made of carbon-coloured plastic, silicone and stainless steel, will keep its contents hot for more than six hours in a 24°C room. Available in Ash or Carbon. RRP\$145 Pre-order from www.letliv.co.nz



MEXICO IN A JAR

Craving homemade Mexican for dinner? Try dousing your tortillas in this Enchilada Sauce from the gurus at Wellington's La Boca Loca. The tomato-based sauce is flavoured with three types of chillies: negro, guajillo and arbol, and adds a spicy burst of rich tomato flavour. RRP\$13.50 Available from Farro Fresh stores and www.labocaloca.co.nz



Culture club

We're enjoying the new range of kombucha (a fermented tea brewed with live bacteria - sounds freaky, but we promise it's good) from Good Buzz Brewing in Wainuiomata. A bit like a ginger beer, the "Booch" is fizzy and refreshing with a tangy edge. Available in five flavours - Green Jasmine, Jade Dew, Lemon Ginger, Feijoa and Original from www.goodbuzz.nz. RRP\$17.90 for a 4 pack.



Buttered up

Regulars at Auckland's farmers' markets may have come across the range of coconut and nut butters from Poppy and Olive. There are four butters available: Coconut, Almond, Chocolate Hazelnut and Amond, Brazil & Cashew. Made from high-quality organic ingredients and low in sugar, they're spreads we can feel good about eating. RRP\$14 Available from Farro Fresh stores and www.poppyandolive.co.nz



BITE-SIZED BEAUTIES

These Sesame Cookies by Wonderland Bakes and Bites are so soft, chewy and delicious you might be surprised to learn they're also gluten-free, grain-free, dairy-free and vegan. Made in Wellington's Island Bay, the cookies contain organic whole seed tahini and can be found in Moore Wilson's and Commonsense Organics Stores.



SWEET FORTUNE

Hungry for words of wisdom? These new fortune cookies from Asian Food Republic are dipped in white chocolate and threads of dried lemongrass, and taste so good you won't mind what the future holds. RRP\$16.99 Available exclusively from Farro Fresh stores.

plate up a masterpiece like Gordon would



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SIDE DISHES



ICE ICE BABY

The temperatures may be dropping, but we're not planning on giving up these Dr Feelgood Ice Pops any time soon. Made from all-natural ingredients and with mouth-watering flavours like Salted Caramel and Apple, Raspberry Lime & Coconut, and Flat White, we think they're just what the doctor ordered. Visit www.drfeelgood.co.nz for stockists.

NEW OPENING



WOO HOO!

We're big fans of Josh Emmett's Madam Woo restaurant in Queenstown, and are looking forward to its arrival in Auckland's Takapuna. Like the original, the restaurant will serve fresh Asian cuisine with a Chinese-Malaysian flavour. Think honey and soy tossed squid, cashew nuts with Szechuan pepper and Nonya chicken curry. The restaurant is set to open early May. www.madamwoo.co.nz



Ti total

We're enjoying the fresh, vibrant flavours of the new Ti Ora tea range. There are four blends available, each using native New Zealand botanicals and ingredients. Flavours include Green Tea with Ginger, Lemongrass & Kawakawa, and Manuka with a Lemon Twist. Available from Farro Fresh stores.



White magic

We're going coconuts for these big, beautiful jars of goodness from Raglan Coconut Yoghurt. Made from coconut cream, probiotics and a touch of local honey, the yoghurt is luxuriously creamy, tangy and surprisingly versatile. Try it on cereal, in smoothies, or with fruit on pancakes. RRP\$16 For stockists visit www.raglancoconutyoghurt.co.nz.

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SIDE DISHES



EGGS-QUISITE

The Easter Bunny need only bring us one thing this year: one of these Salted Brittle Caramel Easter Eggs from Wellington Chocolate Factory. The egg has a rich dark chocolate shell made from organic and fair-trade cocoa, with crunchy chunks of caramel brittle inside. It rests on a bed of wood shavings in its own stylish box, so is ideal for gifting (if you don't eat it first). RRP\$14 Available from www.wcf.co.nz



SOUTH AMERICAN SPICE

Add a splash of South America to your food with this zingy, spicy Aji sauce from The Empanada Kitchen. The Peruvian dipping sauce counts garlic, cayenne, paprika, lemon juice, and tomato among its ingredients, and is excellent with fried eggs, grilled meats and seafood. RRP\$11 from Farro Fresh stores or Moore Wilson's.



Summer stunners

Judges at the Farmers' Markets NZ Summer Food Awards were looking for the best of the season's crops – from juicy stone fruit and ripe tomatoes to spicy garlic and potatoes.

Congratulations to this year's winners:

Tastiest Pip Fruit: MPV Products, Gisborne Farmers' Market (melon selection)

Juiciest Stone Fruit: Teesdale Orchard, Gisborne Farmers' Market (peaches)

Dirt off the Roots: Heatherdale Orchard, Nelson Farmers' Market (yellow tomatoes)

Organic Producer: Little River Organics, Tauranga Farmers' Market (heritage potatoes)

OVERALL WINNER

The overall winners of the summer awards were Gordon and Sue Boyd from Little River Organic Farm in Waihi. The self-described "middle-aged retro hippies" impressed judges with their selection of heritage potatoes, which included Pink Fur, Kowiniwini, Whataroa, Urenika and Karoro varieties. Little River Organic Farm can be found on Saturday mornings at the Tauranga Farmers' Markets.



FARMERS MARKET DIRECTORY

Find your local farmers' market at www.farmersmarkets.org.nz



Bespoke brews

Blending organic tea leaves from around the globe with ingredients like toasted coconut, ginger, cocoa nibs and orange peel, Storm & India Tea Sisters have created a range of bespoke premium teas. Available in duck egg blue or black tin canisters, we can't think of a more soothing and stylish gift for Mother's Day. RRP\$40-50 Buy online at www.stormandindia.com



An eye on Tuatara

Good news for Wellington beer lovers: in February, Tuatara Brewery opened the doors to The Third Eye – a pilot brewery and tasting room on Arthur St in Te Aro. Visitors can taste and take-away exclusive small-batch brews, as well as a selection of Tuatara's classic styles and guest pours. Food comes courtesy of The Goose Shack, which will be serving up its famous hot "slammer" sandwiches from its mobile food truck. For details visit www.tuatarabrewing.co.nz/the-third-eye

ROSSINI

La cenerentola

CINDERELLA

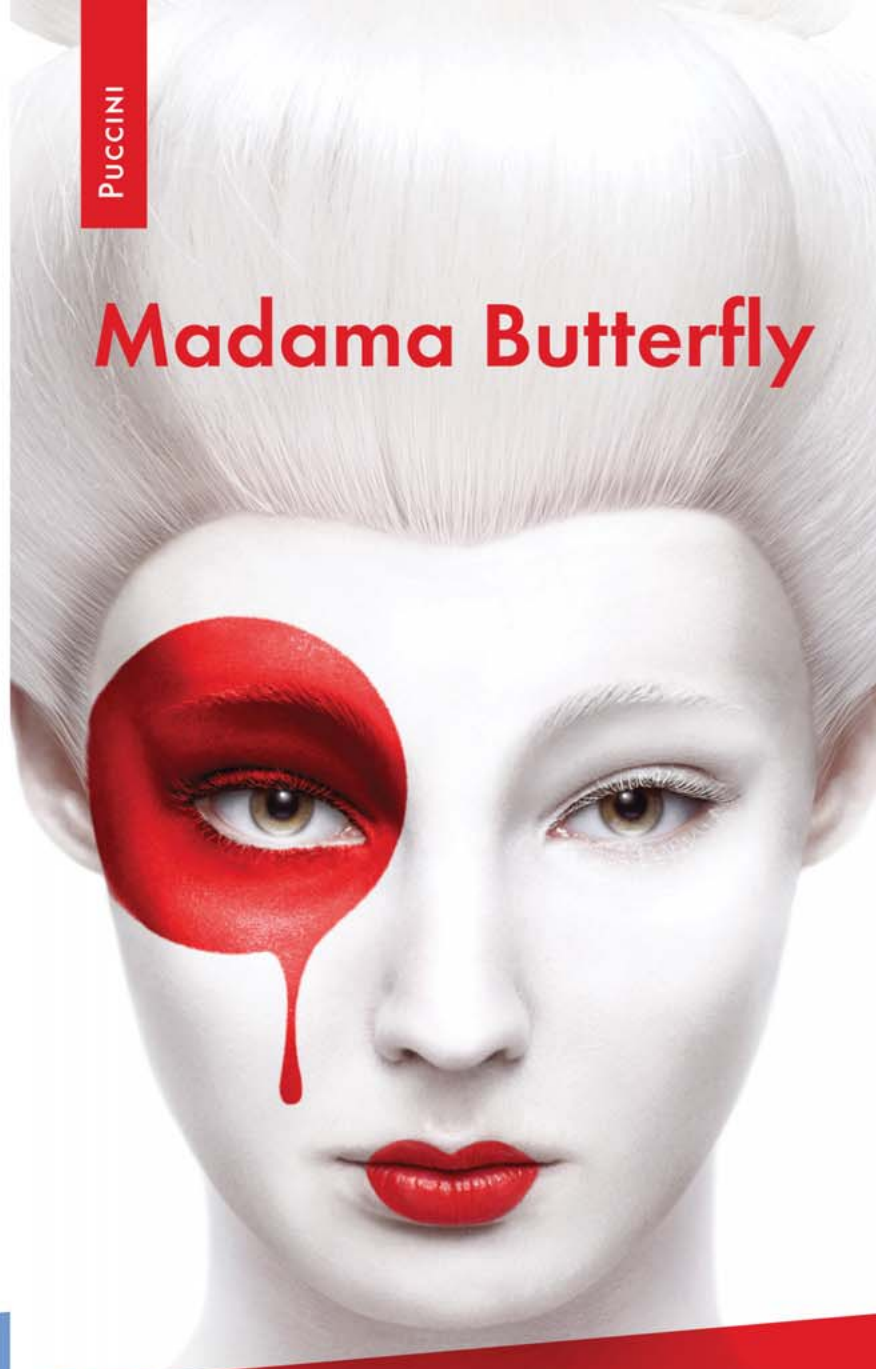


GOODNESS TRIUMPHANT.

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WHAT'S ON

Food and wine events to mark in your diary

MARCH

Sunday 22 March

WAIPARA VALLEY WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

Canterbury's beautiful Waipara Valley plays host to this day of local food and wine. Try award-winning aromatics, pinot noir and chardonnay from the region, attend masterclasses and enjoy performances from entertainers throughout the day. www.waiparavalleywineandfood.co.nz

Saturday 28 March

THE GREAT KIWI BEER FESTIVAL CHRISTCHURCH

In a day-long celebration of Kiwi brewing, more than 300 local, national and international beers will be pouring at Hagley Park, with live music from Australia's Pseudo Echo and Kiwi bands such as Sola Rosa and Hello Sailor. For tickets visit www.greatkiwibeerfestival.co.nz

Saturday 28

WHANGAREI FRITTER FESTIVAL

Gourmet fritters take centre stage at this family friendly day along with music from Dave Dobbyn, Tahuna Breaks and dDub. Don't miss the fritter fight, where cafes and restaurants battle it out for a trophy. See www.venueandeventswangarei.co.nz for more details.

APRIL

Sunday 5

CLYDE WINE AND FOOD HARVEST FESTIVAL

Celebrating the autumn harvest of grapes from Alexandra-Clyde basin, the festival is held among the schist stone buildings in Clyde's historic precinct. There will be more than 20 wine stalls along with a large number of food stalls, live entertainment plus a market and art exhibition. For details visit www.promotedunstan.org.nz

MAY

Friday 1 – Sunday 3

THE FOOD SHOW CHRISTCHURCH

Christchurch is the first stop for The Food Show this year where hundreds of exhibitors will be selling and sampling a huge range of foodie products alongside the latest

kitchen appliances and gadgets. Celebrity chefs will also provide a series of cooking demonstrations and classes. For tickets and show details visit www.foodshow.co.nz

Saturday 2 – Sunday 3

THE CHOCOLATE AND COFFEE SHOW AUCKLAND

The country's top chocolatiers and coffee roasters will gather once more in Auckland's Cloud, for the second year of this delicious event. For details visit www.chocolatecoffeeshow.co.nz

Thursday 14 – Sunday 17

NOOSA INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

One of Australia's premier food, wine and lifestyle events returns with a stellar line-up of local and international chefs and more than 80 of Australia's best winemakers. For ticket and program details visit www.noosafoodandwine.com.au

Saturday 23

BLUFF OYSTER FESTIVAL

This iconic festival returns with a day dedicated to Bluff's famous oysters and the seafood of Southland. For details visit www.bluffoysterfest.co.nz

DISH EVENTS

May 4 and 5

MIELE CHEF'S TABLE WITH KIM EVANS

Get up close and personal with Little and Friday's Kim Evans as she demonstrates how to prepare a beautiful celebration lunch in time for Mother's Day. For details on how to book, visit www.dish.co.nz



June 8

DINE WITH DISH WITH OSTRO & CROSSROADS

Join us at Ostro for a special four course meal designed by Josh Emett and matched with Crossroads wines. See pg 50 for details.



DINING *with* GUSTO

As Gusto at the Grand celebrates its first birthday, we chat to chef Sean Connolly about his classic Italian fare.

If there's any secret to Italian cooking, it's that less is more.

Few understand this better than Sean Connolly (inset), executive chef

of SkyCity's Gusto at the Grand. You won't be served any vapours, foams or drizzles at his classic Italian restaurant, but you will get to know some of the country's best produce – from local Curious Croppers tomatoes to luscious Wairau Valley mozzarella.

"There are so many wonderful growers and artisan producers in New Zealand; it's easy to let the produce speak for itself," says Sean.

Sean's uncomplicated, season-driven menu pays homage to rustic Italian cuisine. Think fresh housemade ricotta drizzled in



honey, rich, savoury mushrooms with silky pillows of gnocchi and meltingly tender veal osso buco on creamy polenta.

"Italian is the ultimate comfort food," says Sean. "It's what I love to eat."

Sean's favourite place to sit is at

Gusto's chef's table, which is situated in the heart of Gusto's large, open kitchen. From here, diners can sit amidst the action and watch as pasta is kneaded, meats are shaved and meals are plated around them.

"I've had all sorts of private dining rooms in my career, but this one is really special."

March 2015 marks one year since Gusto opened its doors. We wish Sean and the team *buon compleanno*, and look forward to enjoying their authentic Italian for years to come.



"ITALIAN IS THE
ULTIMATE COMFORT
FOOD," SAYS SEAN.
"IT'S WHAT I LOVE
TO EAT."

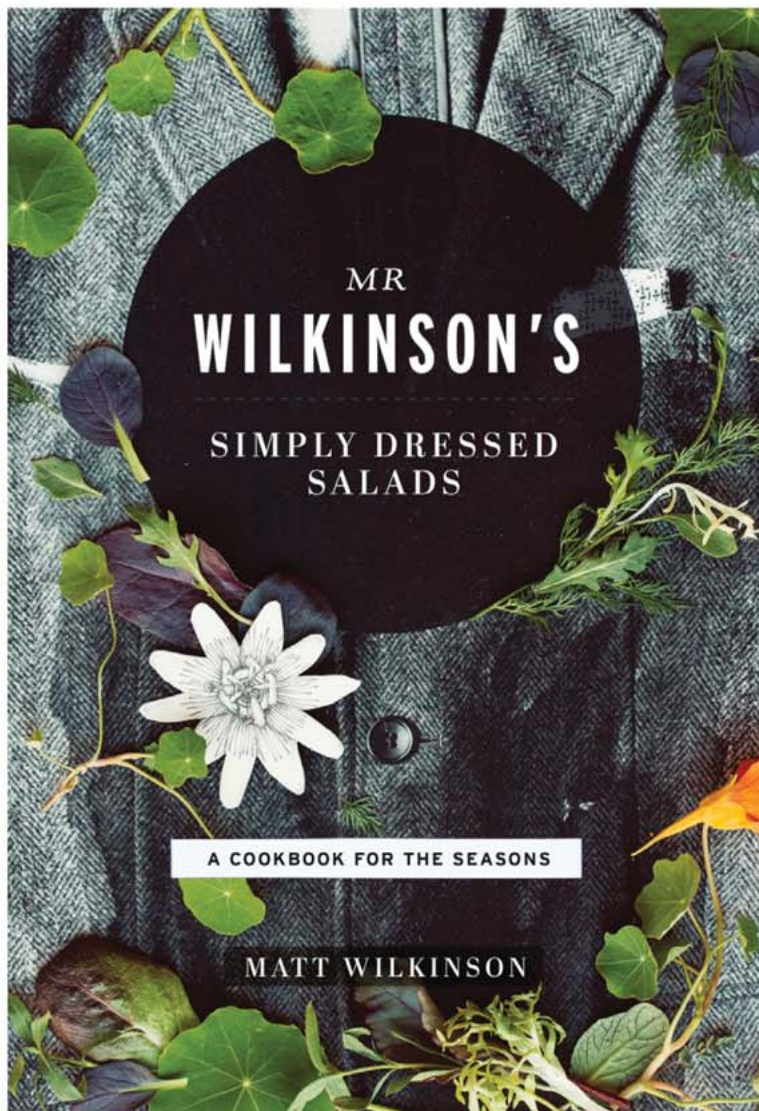


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BOOKS

Reviewed by Alice Galletly



Mr Wilkinson's Simply Dressed Salads

BY MATT WILKINSON

Matt Wilkinson is on a mission: to prove to the world that the humble salad is one of the most diverse and exciting food groups ever. The acclaimed chef and co-owner of Pope Joan, a popular Melbourne restaurant known for its simple produce-driven dishes, makes a compelling case in *Mr Wilkinson's Simply Dressed Salads*. From Sesame-Fried Asparagus in spring through to Shredded Sugarloaf Cabbage with Burrata in winter, the book follows the seasons to feature produce at its peak. These are no mere side salads, either. Dishes like Grilled Peaches & Chicken with Rocket & Kasundi would make a gorgeous summer lunch, while the Warm Salad of Fregola, Chorizo and Mussels is just right for winter supper. There are tips for growing salad leaves, a section on "basics" like smoked yoghurt and pickled shallots, and recipes for dressings, presented as an illustrated family tree. With its evocative photography and botanical-style illustrations, this is a beautiful book that breathes new life into the word "salad".

Random House – RRP \$54.99 (hb)



Cantina: Recipes from a Mexican Kitchen

BY PAUL WILSON

"You will not find a burrito recipe in this cookbook", promises the back cover of *Cantina: Recipes from a Mexican Kitchen*. Instead, this collection of recipes by Latin American cooking expert, Paul Wilson, delves deep into the heart of Mexican cuisine. It begins with the building blocks of Latin American cooking: recipes for moles, spice rubs, pickles and stocks, as well as beans, rice and doughs. It then leads us from breakfast to dessert, stopping along the way to explore the smoky street stalls of Mexico City, the seafood dishes of the Baja and Yucatán peninsulas and aromatic markets of Oaxaca. Like the photography, the book's dishes are cheerful and vibrant – Watermelon Margaritas, Cherry Gazpacho with Duck Carnitas and Barbecued Chilli Chicken with Cumin & Pineapple Caramel. Truly a feast for the senses, *Cantina* is ideal for anyone who loves the bright, bold flavours of Mexican food.

Hardie Grant/Random House NZ – RRP\$54.99 (hb)

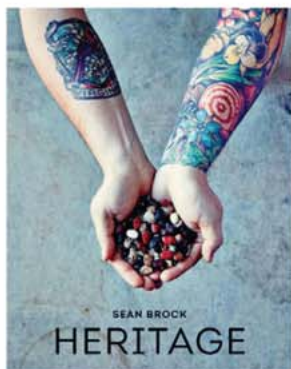


My Underground Kitchen

BY JESS DANIELS

Two years ago, a friend joked to Jess Daniels – then a food blogger just back from her OE – that she would pay her to cook meals for her during the week. *Jess' Underground Kitchen* was born soon after and, as word spread, Aucklanders in the know began stopping at Daniels' house to pick up her home-cooked meals on their way home from work. *My Underground Kitchen* is her first cookbook and Daniels leads us from summer through to winter, sharing seasonal recipes to satisfy every craving. You'll find everything from Bircher Muesli to Moroccan Slow-Roasted Lamb, Chipotle Orange Pulled Pork to Almond Croissants. Many of the dishes can be cooked in 30 minutes or less (cook and prep times are provided) while others, like the Slow-Cooked Beef Ragu, can be saved for a lazy winter Sunday. With a wide variety of easy-to-follow recipes, this will suit busy cooks of all abilities.

Penguin Random House NZ – RRP\$49.99 (pb)
Out April 2



Heritage

BY SIMON BAJADA

If you've noticed the appearance of fried chicken, green tomatoes or grits on menus recently, Virginia-born chef Sean Brock is probably the cause. He's at the helm of a Southern food revival; famed for elevating low-country fare to new heights in his restaurants McCrady's and Husk in Charleston, South Carolina. He's also something of a food warrior: campaigning to preserve heritage Appalachian crops like rice peas, flint corn and farro. In his first cookbook, Brock introduces his favourite heirloom ingredients and shares the recipes that made him famous. These range from the homely to the haute, with classics like Fried Chicken and Gravy and Hoppin' John sitting beside Stone Crab with Cucumber Juice, Fennel Jelly and Raw Apple. Heritage's complex dishes and American ingredients could challenge Kiwi home cooks, but the knock-out photography and inspiring stories will provide plenty of enjoyment for foodies.

Hardie Grant Books
RRP\$70 (hb)



The New Nordic

BY SIMON BAJADA

Surely the most attractive new cookbook to hit our shelves, Simon Bajada's *The New Nordic* is everything you'd expect from a chef, food stylist and photographer living in Stockholm. Divided into nine chapters including 'From the Sea', 'From the Land', 'Classics' and 'Larder', the recipes are for modern everyday dishes that reflect the rich food histories of Scandinavia. Bajada's moody photographs of wintry Nordic landscapes set the tone for the food, which is clean, delicate and produce-led. You could impress with Beetroot Carpaccio, Goat's Cheese and Minted Pea Relish, or go simple with Fresh Radishes served with Fennel Butter and Honey. Classics like Swedish meatballs, Danish smørrebrød and gravlax are all present, as well as trendier dishes like Buckwheat Crepes with Chanterelles and Kale. Modern, cool and just a bit different, *The New Nordic* is for those who like their food with a side of style.

Hardie Grant Books
RRP\$49.95 (hb)
Out May 1



New Feast

BY GREG AND LUCY MALOUF

Though neither are vegetarian, a recent focus on health has seen Middle Eastern food champions Greg and Lucy Malouf eating less meat and more plants. Their seventh cookbook, *New Feast*, reflects this shift in diet, which lends itself well to the pulses, grains and aromatic spices so central to Middle Eastern cuisine. *New Feast* is full of modern Middle Eastern-inspired vegetarian recipes that are big on texture and colour. Think Stuffed and Deep-Fried Zucchini Blossoms; Persian Herb Salad with Figs and Labneh, or Slow-Roasted Eggplants with Saffron-Lemon Cream. The food is designed for sharing, and instead of courses the recipes are divided into different occasions, such as "Family Weekend Picnic", "Middle-of the Week Working Lunch", or "Pull-The-Stops-Out Celebration Dinner". With elegant photography and an exciting range of fresh ideas, you'll want to keep one copy for the coffee table and one for the kitchen.

Random House -
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Lunch for those at the villa is a casual affair – fresh salads, grilled chicken or veal and fresh fish along with a selection of breads accompanied with a glass of wine.

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There will also be the opportunity for you to enjoy the wonderful dining options in Lucca and on occasion you will dine at the local restaurants.



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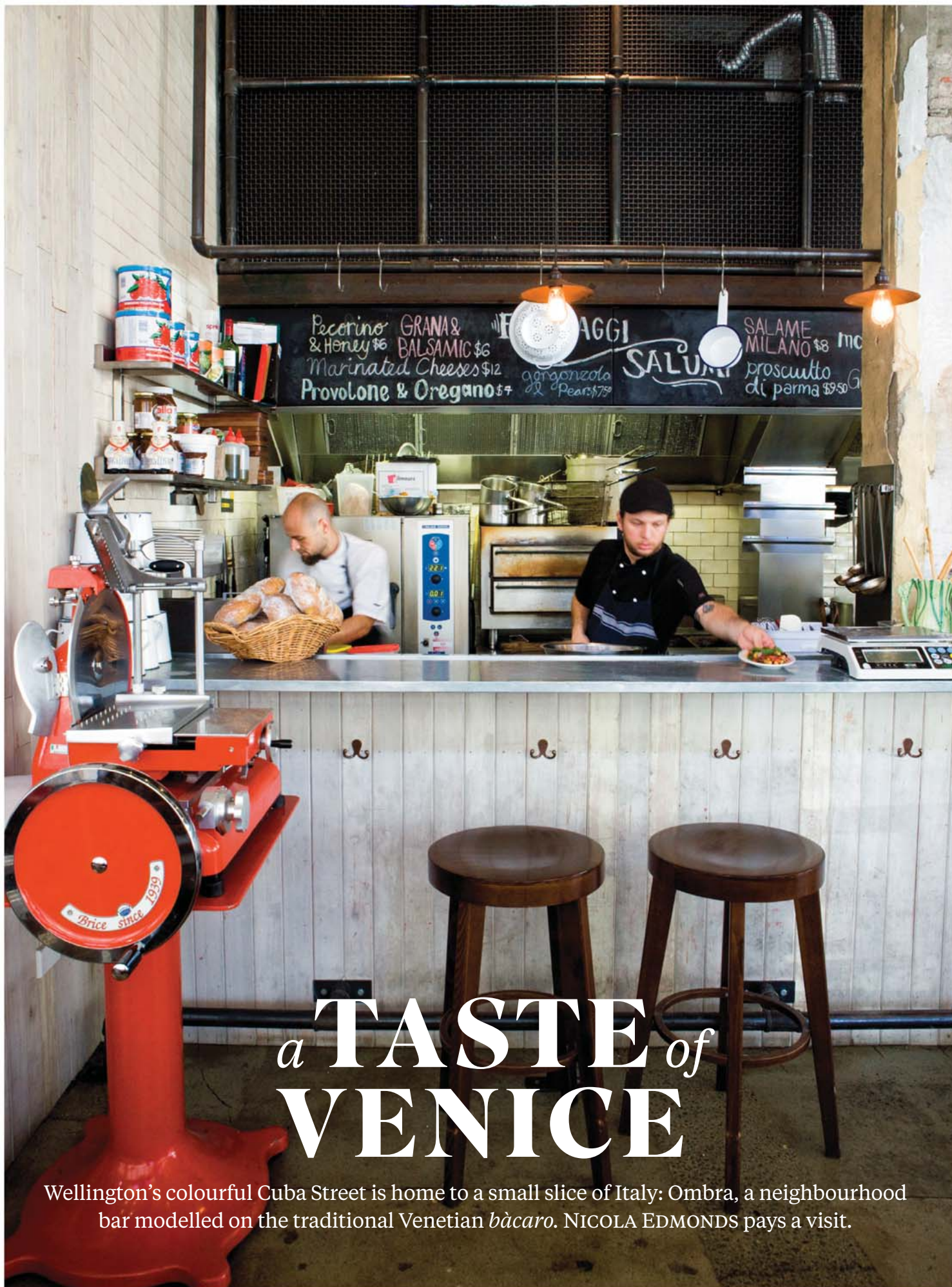
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Wellington's colourful Cuba Street is home to a small slice of Italy: Ombra, a neighbourhood bar modelled on the traditional Venetian *bàcaro*. NICOLA EDMONDS pays a visit.



Elwyn and Russel Scott were happily led astray while asking for directions through the tangled back streets of Venice.

An assortment of helpful locals kindly directed the couple to their favourite *bàcaro* instead. In Venice the *bàcaro* is a place to stop, to chat and gossip, to take a small glass of wine (*ombra*) or spritz while grazing from small plates of delectable snacks, known as *cichèti*, set out upon the bar. Like tiny bastions, these bars fly the flag for humble simplicity.

The Scotts were so entranced by that bar that they stayed there for the rest of the evening and on into the small hours of the morning. The first of many *bàcari* that they visited during the rest of their stay, it was to plant the seed of an idea to create their own *bàcaro* back in New Zealand.

From his first job at Cobb & Co through to today with three successful bar/restaurants of his own, Russel has watched the industry change over four decades: “We’ve gone from a \$50 main to ‘Let’s go out three or four times a week for something cheap’. This was the style that would suit that.”

There were further research trips to London and Europe before he returned to Wellington with a clear vision of the kind of restaurant he hoped to establish. “We found that perfect building... It was just fate.”

Built in the 1930s and barely altered since, that perfect building occupies a location that, while not ‘back-street’, is a neighbourhood of both polish and grit. Opened in 2013, Ombra nestles amidst the burgeoning upper Cuba St dining precinct and colourful adult entertainment venues nearby.

Bleached linen café curtains catch the breeze at the open windows of the restaurant. Dark wooden tables and chairs are set off by the warm tones of Italian summer on the chapped plaster walls.

Pressed and perforated in Australia, the intentionally rusty tin ceiling panels hide acoustic tiles that keep the sounds generated by hard surfaces – a busy kitchen and cheek-by-jowl dining – to a chattable minimum. “There’s a lot of effort that went into the details,” Russel explains. “This is somewhere we want you to relax. We’re immensely proud of Ombra – it’s more than a business.”

OPPOSITE PAGE: The open kitchen allows diners to watch the preparation of dishes.

TOP LEFT: Head chef Dante Kachan Therazo preparing gnocchi.

TOP RIGHT: Delicate shavings of Grana Padano adorn Dante’s Eggplant Bolognese.



ABOVE: General manager Lily Nguyen and head chef Dante Kachan Therazo head up a dedicated team.

OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: Popular shared plates include (clockwise from top) Salmon Crostino, Fish Tartare, Pork Belly Saltimbocca, Mussels al Pomodoro, Chickpea Salad, Pizza Fritta with Prosciutto, Sundried Tomato and Rocket.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT: Anthony Monti, one of the front of house team, readies tables for service.



Dante's simple hands-on approach is in keeping with his Italian heritage. "I like to go back where it's from *grandmother's kitchen* – where you have all the best ingredients and try to get the best flavour."

Dante Kachan Therazo joined the Ombra team in 2013 soon after its opening, working as chef de partie alongside then head chef Giulio Ricatti. Though born and raised in Brazil, his parents are from Ravenna and Calabria in Italy. There was no shortage of culinary inspiration at home but Dante was a relative latecomer to the field of cookery.

At the age of 23 he was midway through a degree in civil engineering. It was only when he began watching cooking shows on his days off that he was inspired to try cooking and signed up at the local culinary university. Initially he hoped to combine the two degrees, but cooking won out. "I decided to give myself to gastronomy," says Dante.

Last year he assumed the role of head chef at Ombra and while he admits it was daunting at first, he felt he had as much to give as to learn. The young chef now oversees the Ombra kitchen with a quiet assurance.

Dante's simple hands-on approach is in keeping with his Italian heritage. "I like to go back where it's from grandmother's kitchen – where you have all the best ingredients and try to get the best flavour." While working from traditional recipes, the chef explains he prefers not to be confined and will often tweak his dishes to make the most of local ingredients or new techniques, so long as he can maintain the authenticity of the original.

Drawn from the recipes of his mother and grandmother, he has introduced a deeply savoury eggplant Bolognese and *cannolo*, small straws of pastry stuffed with ricotta that were a regular treat when he was growing up.

Dante is blithely free from food snobbery and happy to oblige the mainly Kiwi clientele by adding one or two adaptations to suit. "Sometimes we do seafood risotto and people ask me to add cheese. That's something not really traditional but still tasting good," he explains. "I don't mind. I'm quite open-minded with these sort of things, to break a bit the rules, and bring some new ideas."

Traditional *bàcaro* menu items include salt cod *baccalà*, *fritto misto* (mixed fried seafood), deep-fried stuffed olives and a variety of *pizzette* (mini pizza). Succulent pork belly saltimbocca, kumara gnocchi and the venison meatballs are always popular. The restaurant has established a happy band of regulars, including many expat Italians. "So I know we must be doing it right," says Dante.

And of course, there's an extensive range of wines. There are 11 Italian out of the 12 red wines on offer and just one New Zealand pinot noir. This bias has raised a few eyebrows, but locals have been quick to adapt and





“In Venice the *bàcaro* is a place to stop, to chat and gossip, to take a small glass of wine (*ombra*) or spritz while grazing from small plates of delectable snacks, known as *cichèti*, set out upon the bar.”

to become attached to the traditional Venetian spritz – a refreshing blend of Campari or Aperol with a dash of soda, a little Prosecco and a slice of orange.

Dante imports staple supplies when no better substitute is available locally. These include cured meats, cheeses, San Marzano tomatoes (which are ideal for pizza), and a special type of flour, Le 5 Stagioni, which is lighter and more suitable for the pizza dough that is prepared every morning. “I found a really great mascarpone cheese recently so I buy that from here. I like to keep that balance,” Dante explains.

Nicknamed ‘the Ferrari’, Dante proudly points out the gleaming red meat slicer – a recent purchase and a common fixture in many Venetian *bàcari*, where delicate slivers of cured meats are a ubiquitous offering.

“We could have bought a real Ferrari, but this is ours,” remarks general manager Lily Nguyen, “it’s much better!”

French expat Lily began working for Russel as a breakfast waitress in his Belgian-style beer bar five years ago. These days she is general manager, maitre d’ and all-round linchpin of the Ombra culture.

In keeping with the traditions of the Venetian *bàcari*, the Ombra kitchen is open late. Lily shudders at the mere thought of eating before 8.30pm. “Before, it was impossible to find somewhere to eat late.” Though it has been a learning

curve, she explains that diners have come to relish the opportunity to eat out both prior to and post theatre-going.

The restaurant is also unapologetically Wi-Fi-free. “It’s so nice – we see it every day – people talking to each other!” she exclaims with raised brow.

Tables at Ombra are just half an arms length short of adjoining and not by accident. Russel ordered the tables to be sized 10cm smaller than the standard issue so he could squeeze one more setting into the dining space. “They’re *really* close together,” he says. “It’s not everyone’s thing but that’s how we felt in Venice – sort of ‘in amongst friends’. That’s how it should be.”


Conversations are struck up between tables, amongst relative strangers. Some even share plates across tables with their neighbouring diners.

Dante and Lily fizz with enthusiasm and affection for the restaurant and their clientele, whom they regard with the fondness of doting parents.

“It’s all about conviviality,” says Lily. In April she will travel to Venice for the first time, to bring fresh ideas and inspiration back home. “It’s amazing to see the variety of people – to see the chief executive of a bank sit next to the plumber, or student... or whoever.” ◉

ABOVE: Tarakihi Tartare garnished with edible flowers and caviar.

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BELOW AND LEFT: Pastry chef Jasmin Hill creates delicate little Italian amaretti morbidi biscuits in a range of fresh and often unexpected flavours.



Tradition with a twist

Amaretti morbidi have been a popular Italian sweet for hundreds of years. Local pastry chef Jasmin Hill adds a touch of local flavour to the varieties she makes in her Auckland kitchen.

The maxim “Do one thing and do it well” lies at the heart of Amaretti Kitchen, where delicate little almond biscuits are the stars.

While crisp *amaretti di saronno* are well known here, Auckland pastry chef Jasmin Hill makes *amaretti morbidi*: a soft, moist almond biscuit dusted with icing sugar and topped with a tiny chocolate ball. These versions are beloved in Italy and Jasmin adds her own special twist of flavour to these Italian treats.

“I always wanted to bring something different to them,” says Jasmin. “I’ve just added some beautiful New Zealand flavours to bring something new to a traditional recipe.” And so, alongside her original style amaretti made with Amaretto liqueur, there are some more unexpected flavour combinations like Raspberry & Lime, Chocolate & Macadamia Nut, Feijoa, Orange Cointreau, Valrhona Chocolate Bomb, and Limoncello.

Jasmin first tasted amaretti morbidi while visiting Italy as part of her travels as a competitive paraglider, but it was to be more than a decade later that her encounter with the Italian delicacy would inspire a new career.

A keen paraglider since her late teens, Jasmin broke her back while competing in 2000 and although sufficiently recovered after surgery to compete three months later at the World Air Games in Spain, she says she realized she had lost some of her confidence. Back in New Zealand she trained in tandem paragliding and balanced the seasonal work as a pilot with cheffing, predominantly in Queenstown, where she discovered a love of patisserie.

A self-confessed ‘creative type’ (Jasmin also paints, gardens and sews), she says pastry and desserts have always held a special fascination for her. “It’s the creativity and the ability to make things look and taste beautiful. You eat with your eyes [and] I love making things look pretty.”



“These look like the traditional style, and then have all these *lovely, different, delicious* flavours to go in there.”

By 2013 Jasmin knew the physical nature of paragliding work was getting too much, and instead chose to give free rein to her passion for pastry. She completed the Certificate in Practical Patisserie at the Auckland University of Technology and decided to start her own business, focusing on making something with history.

“I love traditional recipes – they made such amazing things hundreds of years ago and they’re still making them now so they must be really good.”

She found a gap in the market for the beautiful biscuits she had tried in Italy and began the painstaking process of recipe testing and tweaking what was to become her final product; finally launching Amaretti Kitchen early in 2014.

Jasmin’s favourite part of the process is developing new varieties. “I love creating new flavours – and trying them all,” she grins. “I don’t get bored of the old flavours because I think they’re amazing – I still eat far too many of the macadamia ones!”

As we chat, she takes a batch of her new Strawberry & Vanilla amaretti out of the oven, which she has developed for Valentine’s Day. Still slightly warm, the biscuits are beautifully moist with a dollop of rich, sweet strawberry preserve inside and a slight hint of vanilla. Jasmin presented them with little marzipan hearts on top for Valentine’s gifts, but now they are easily identified by the delicate pink chocolate balls that perch on top of each one.

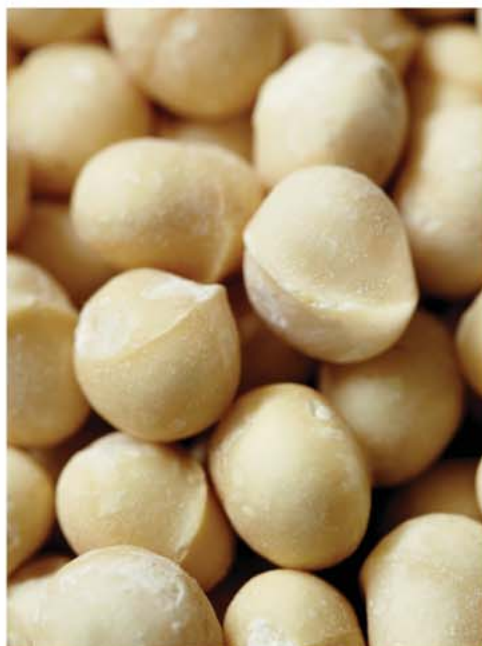
She has high hopes for the new flavour, which uses strawberries from Ye Olde Berry Farm in the Waikato and Heilala Vanilla. Jasmin is very particular about the ingredients she uses and where she sources them, preferring to work with local suppliers where she can. Her kitchen is in Silverdale, north of Auckland, and the macadamia nuts come from nearby Helensville business Nuts About New Zealand. Always on the lookout for inspiration, Jasmin is excited about the honey she has just discovered they produce from their own hives on the farm too.

“I went out there last week and tried their honey macadamias, which were delicious. [They] roast them, then roll them in a candied honey... they have their own bees. So I’m thinking about doing a honey-flavoured amaretti, and maybe a honey-macadamia flavour.”

Jasmin buys all her fruit fresh, and in the case of the raspberries and strawberries turns them into luscious preserves, ensuring she can continue to produce those flavours even after the season ends.

Far from deterring fans of the traditional amaretti, Jasmin says the feedback about her flavoured versions has been fantastic. “Not everyone likes almonds,” she acknowledges. “I found that at a lot of the tastings the Raspberry & Lime variety were the most popular.”





She makes 250 amaretti at a time, once or twice a week (depending on orders), and painstakingly colours each of the tiny Valrhona chocolate balls that sit on top in a variety of shades that reflect the flavours within. The biscuits will last for two weeks if refrigerated and she is working on little bite-sized versions that she plans to package in jars to help extend their shelf-life.

Now chalking up a year in business, Jasmin is the first to admit it's been a learning curve, from finding packaging to sourcing appropriate ingredients. "The doughs can be a little bit temperamental. You can ruin them very easily so you have to be very careful, and with the ingredients being so expensive it's a very expensive mistake to make. But I'm getting much better at it now."

Amaretti Kitchen is finding a growing fan base among those who have tried them in the Auckland cafés she currently supplies (Bambina and Baguette and Co) and who seek her out at the monthly Coatesville Market and at her tastings at stockist Farro Fresh.

She says local Italians have also become firm fans of her amaretti morbidi. "They're really excited because you just

can't get them here, fresh like this. There are biscuits out there that people call 'amaretti' because they're an almond-based gluten-free biscuit with those three ingredients [almond, eggs and sugar] but these look like the traditional style, and then have all these lovely, different, delicious flavours to go in there."


Jasmin can now look towards doing the next thing well. Her future plans include broadening the range of flavours (espresso is pegged as a possibility) and to include the crispier amaretti di saronno but again, with a Jasmin Hill twist. "I'd like to do my own crispy versions, different shapes and flavours and sizes of amaretti."

She's also keen to explore using the amaretti morbidi as wedding favours, selling the fruit preserves separately, and getting into cake making. With her eye for creativity it seems there will be no stopping this pastry perfectionist. "I love the feedback that I've had about the product, that keeps me going and pushes me towards doing more." ◉

Amaretti Kitchen – www.amarettikitchen.co.nz

OPPOSITE PAGE: Jasmin makes around 250 amaretti at a time, painstakingly hand-rolling and decorating each one.

ABOVE: Fresh local ingredients such as berries and macadamia nuts inspire the flavour combinations at Amaretti Kitchen.



HONEY-ROASTED CARROTS
WITH DATES, DANDELIONS AND
MOROCCAN DRESSING
[see recipe page 42]

A NEW WAY TO FEAST

Although living in separate continents, a moment of synchronicity found both Greg Malouf and Lucy Malouf change their eating habits, inspiring them to collaborate on a new book of modern Middle Eastern vegetarian cuisine.

After several hours of playing phone tag and negotiating time differences between Auckland and Dubai, I finally catch Greg Malouf just as he's returning from the gym. Worried that I might be interrupting a well-deserved sleep after being up all night cooking at his luxurious new five star restaurant, the gym is the last place I thought he'd be. Funnily enough, Greg finds himself surprised to be there too.



"It's not something I'd ever dreamt I'd be doing," he laughs. "I go three times a week and force myself to work with a personal trainer. It's hell at the time, but I do have a lot more energy now and at my age I need it."

Hitting the gym is not the only health measure the celebrated master of Middle Eastern cuisine has taken, Greg has also adjusted his diet to consist of mainly fruit and vegetables and in the course of a year has dropped just over 20 kilograms.

He says it's been a long time coming. As a survivor of not one, but two heart transplants, he understands the importance of the role that diet plays in his overall health; but as a chef and lover of food he, at times, found it hard to resist the odd treat.

"I realised there were still a lot of things I wanted to do with my life. As I'm getting older I knew I would have to try and change my ways a little bit so that I had the energy to get the most out of my day."

After researching how to eat more healthily, he came to realise the secret lay in eating whole, plant-based and unprocessed food. The downside for Greg was that this meant restricting his intake of meat and seafood and he had no intention of becoming a vegetarian.

"I love vegetables, but over the course of my restaurant life they were never the main event. A meal was always about the meat or protein and the vegetables were just sides, even if they were delicious ones. I had to change my way of thinking and instead of giving up on meat I had to just cut down, keep everything in balance and concentrate on quality."

This meant thinking back to how he was brought up as a Lebanese Australian boy living in Melbourne's suburbs, where his dad kept a substantial vegetable garden in the backyard and his mum and aunts would make beautiful family feasts using the produce.

"My dad loved his vegetable garden and would spend hours and hours out there. He even made a hydroponic garden, which we thought was crazy at the time, but now I

**WILD GARLIC, LEEK AND CURRANT
FRITTERS WITH HONEY**
[see recipe page 42]



"I love vegetables, but over the course of my restaurant life they were never the main event. A meal was always about the *meat* or *protein* and the vegetables were just sides, even if they were delicious ones."

realise he was actually quite clever and innovative. I didn't inherit his love of gardening, but the memories of eating his just-picked cucumbers, tomatoes and beans are very strong with me."

At the same time, Greg's former wife and writing partner, Lucy Malouf, was changing her diet too and had reverted to the vegetarian life she had enjoyed during her student days.

Speaking about their changing lifestyles over the phone between their respective homes in London and Dubai, Lucy and Greg decided to collaborate once again to create their seventh cookbook together: *New Feast, Modern Middle Eastern Vegetarian*.

"I'd been experimenting with vegetable recipes, thinking back to my childhood and having a play around with traditional Middle Eastern dishes and giving them



TURKISH EGGS WITH
SPINACH, CHILLI AND
YOGHURT CREAM

“I’d been experimenting with vegetable recipes, thinking back to my childhood and having a play around with traditional Middle Eastern dishes and giving them a contemporary twist.”

a contemporary twist. We thought this book would be something that would interest our readers and give them a new perspective on vegetarian cooking,” says Greg.

While he developed the recipes, Lucy researched ingredients and stories about Middle Eastern cuisine and wrote introductions to each section and recipe.

The result is a beautiful collection of vibrant home-styled vegetarian recipes drawn from North Africa, Moorish Spain, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iran and Jordan and given the modern Malouf twist. *New Feast* covers every meal of the day from breakfast through to dessert and includes sections on pickles and relishes, raw vegetable salads, butters and preserves and Middle Eastern ices.

Some of the recipes fuse Italian and Middle Eastern flavours in unexpectedly delicious ways.

“When I first started being more cautious about what I ate I was working as the head chef at Petersham Nurseries [in the UK], which had a bit of a reputation for Italian-based dishes, so that was quite an inspiration for me. I liked experimenting with how I could add a bit of a Middle Eastern touch to those,” says Greg.

Other recipes hark back to his days at MoMo, the much-lauded eatery he ran in Melbourne for 11 years and the venture that sparked his reputation.

His dedication to educating people about Middle Eastern food, particularly Lebanese cuisine, in telling them there is so much more to it than a late night post-pub kebab, resulted in Greg being honoured as an Ambassador by the American University in Beirut. It’s a distinction that would have made his parents very proud.

“They weren’t that keen on me becoming a chef. In those days it wasn’t seen as a profession but more as a laborious type of job. In the end though, when I began training my dad would get up very early every morning and iron my chef’s whites for me, so they came around. I think they would be very happy with what I’ve achieved.”

And the achievements keep on coming. Late last year Malouf opened Cle Dubai, a multimillion-dollar restaurant venture in that most decadent of cities. While the lavish fit-out and the opening were designed to attract the glitterati, the food is trademark Malouf.

He says that in a way being there feels like coming home. “It’s wonderful to be cooking Middle Eastern food professionally in the Middle East, right where everything comes from. I have family nearby in Lebanon and it’s a privilege as well as an opportunity for me. I feel very lucky and now I feel well enough to go into this next stage in my life with a lot of energy.”

Turkish Eggs with Spinach, Chilli and Yoghurt Cream

Softly oozing eggs combine with spinach and a tangy yoghurt cream to make an unbeatable breakfast dish. It’s important not to overcook the eggs, so the baking time will somewhat depend on the idiosyncrasies of your oven.

2 bunches spinach, stalks removed, or 500 grams frozen spinach, defrosted	1 teaspoon salt
50 grams butter, plus extra to grease	½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
3 large shallots, finely sliced	4 extra-large eggs
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped	Yoghurt cream
1 teaspoon Turkish red chilli flakes	200 grams Greek-style yoghurt
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon	80ml pure (double or heavy) cream
	½ teaspoon sweet paprika
	salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Blanch small batches of the spinach leaves in plenty of boiling salted water for 10 seconds. Refresh in cold water and then squeeze out as much moisture as possible. Loosen the clumps of spinach and chop it finely.

Heat the butter in a large frying pan. Add the shallots, garlic, chilli and spices and season with salt and pepper. Sauté over a medium heat until soft. Add the spinach and cook for 5 minutes, or until the spinach is soft.

Generously butter a medium ovenproof dish and spread the spinach mix evenly over the base. Make 4 little wells in the spinach and crack in the eggs. Bake for 12 minutes then check for doneness. The eggs should be starting to set, but still very runny.

Mix the yoghurt with the cream, paprika, salt and pepper. Spoon over the eggs and return to the oven for a further 3–4 minutes, or until the eggs are cooked to your liking. Serve immediately with warm crusty bread. **Serves 4**

Honey-Roasted Carrots with Dates, Dandelions and Moroccan Dressing

This salad is a little bit Moroccan in inspiration, with its emphasis on the underlying sweetness of roasted carrots, fudgy nuggets of Medjool dates and a splash of orange flower water in the spicy dressing. We like to use a mixture of different coloured heirloom varieties of carrot, when we can find them, but otherwise, we'll use smaller Dutch carrots that come with their greenery still intact.

60 grams hazelnuts	80 grams soft goat's cheese, roughly crumbled
400 grams baby carrots (heirloom varieties, ideally), with tops attached	Moroccan dressing
1 teaspoon honey	1 clove garlic crushed with ½ teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon pomegranate molasses	¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons thyme leaves	¼ teaspoon ground cumin
salt and freshly ground black pepper	¼ teaspoon sweet paprika
2 tablespoons olive oil	¼ teaspoon Turkish red chilli flakes
1 shallot, finely sliced	juice of 1 lemon
55 grams (2 generous handfuls) dandelion leaves or watercress leaves, well washed and roughly sliced	drizzle of honey
6 Medjool dates, pitted and diced	2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
	splash of orange flower water (optional)

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Scatter the hazelnuts into a small baking tray and roast in the oven for 8–10 minutes, or until the skins darken and they start to smell toasty. Tip into a tea towel and rub away the skins. Chop the nuts roughly and set aside.

Scrub (or peel) the carrots well, leaving the tops and wispy end bits attached. Make sure you winkle out any bits of soil that can lodge in and around the stalks. Arrange the carrots in a heavy-based roasting tin, drizzle with honey and pomegranate molasses, scatter on the thyme leaves and season well. Toss them with the oil and roast for 25–30 minutes, or until well browned and cooked through. A little crunchy caramelisation around the skinny ends is a good thing.

Remove from the oven and set aside. While the carrots are roasting, make the dressing. Put all the ingredients in a clean jar with a lid and shake together.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the shallot, dandelion leaves, dates and hazelnuts. Add the warm carrots and enough dressing to coat everything lightly. Add the crumbled cheese and serve straight away, ideally while the carrots are still warm.

Serves 4

Wild Garlic, Leek and Currant Fritters with Honey

Doughnuts and fritters are found all around the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, although this savoury version is based on Sicilian zeppole. With their crunchy exterior and soft, oozing centre they are fabulous with a pre-dinner drink, but you can also serve them as part of a mezze selection. Try alternating the flavours with fennel seeds and ricotta, Turkish red chilli flakes, snipped chives or even diced olives.

100 grams unsalted butter, diced	2 tablespoons currants
½ teaspoon salt	⅓ cup thickly shredded wild garlic leaves (ramps)
300ml water	vegetable oil, for deep-frying
180 grams plain (all-purpose) flour	2–3 tablespoons warmed honey, to serve
3 large eggs (or 4 small-medium eggs)	salt flakes, to serve
150 grams soft, creamy feta, finely crumbled	

To make the fritters, combine the butter, salt and water in a medium saucepan and slowly bring to the boil so that the butter completely dissolves. As the liquid boils up, quickly add the flour in one go and mix vigorously with a wooden spoon to incorporate it into the liquid.

Beat over a lower heat for 3–4 minutes, until the mixture is glossy and comes away from the sides of the pan in a smooth ball.

Tip the hot dough into the bowl of a stand-mixer. Beat for 1 minute on medium speed, then increase it to the maximum. Add the eggs, one at a time, then continue beating on maximum speed for 5 minutes, until the dough has cooled. Fold in the feta, currants and wild garlic leaves gently, taking care not to over mix.

When ready to cook, pour vegetable oil into a deep fryer or saucepan to a depth of around 8cm and heat to 170°C. (If you don't have a candy thermometer, the oil will have reached the correct temperature when it is shimmering, and when a small cube of bread sizzles up to the surface and turns a pale golden brown in about 40 seconds.)

Drop spoonfuls of the batter into the hot oil, taking care to incorporate some feta, currants and garlic shreds into each one. Fry in batches for 5 minutes, or until they transform into lovely golden brown puffs. Turn them around in the oil to ensure they colour evenly all over. Drain them on kitchen paper for a few seconds then serve while hot with a drizzle of warm honey and a sprinkling of salt flakes. **Makes around 24**



Recipes and images extracted from *New Feast* by Greg and Lucy Malouf published by Hardie Grant Books, RRP \$64.99. Recipes have been reproduced with minor style changes.

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KITCHEN APPLIANCES HANDMADE IN ITALY

HUMBLE PIE

True Neapolitan pizza is one of the world's simplest dishes, but getting it right is no easy feat. Few people know this better than Kevin Morris, owner of Dante's Pizzeria in Auckland.



Close your eyes and imagine a pizza. What do you see? Is it a cheesy, ham and pineapple-studded wheel that comes delivered in a box to your door? Or perhaps a gourmet extravaganza of chèvre, rocket and figs? For English-born Kevin Morris, pizza chef and owner of Auckland's Dante's Pizzeria Napoletana, it's neither.

"The only real pizza is Neapolitan pizza," he tells me when I meet him at his tiny restaurant in Ponsonby Central. "Once you start putting chicken or pineapple on a pizza, it becomes something else."

For the uninitiated, Neapolitan pizza is light and chewy with an airy, blistered crust, humbly topped with fresh ingredients and cooked rapidly in a scorching wood-fired oven.

Kevin tells me he first fell for it as a child, when his mother would take him to visit his Italian grandfather, Dante, in Genoa. He owned a tiny pizzeria overlooking the port and would make authentic Margherita pizzas for Kevin and his brother.

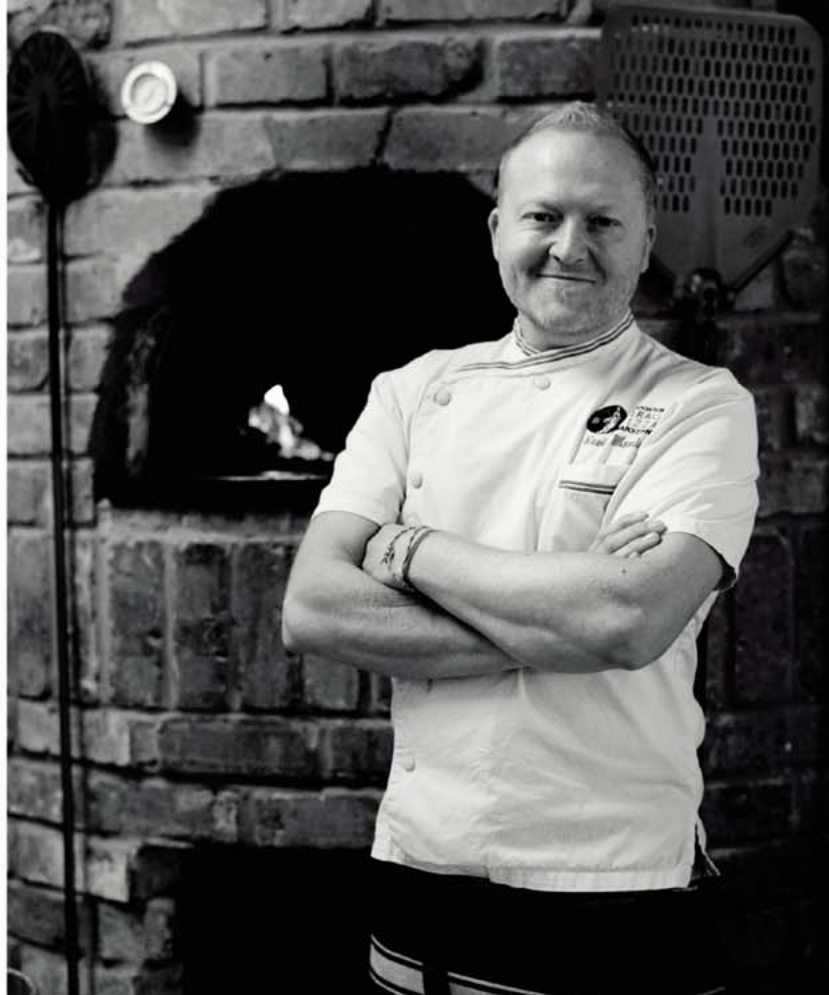
"My mother would say: 'Dante, Dante, keep feeding them!' because I hardly ate anything in England and was really skinny, but used to love his pizza so much."

Decades later, when he moved from the UK to New Zealand, Kevin decided to follow in his grandfather's footsteps. In 2009 he opened Dante's in Kumeu, north-west of central Auckland, where his authentic Neapolitan pies were first met with mixed reception.

"When I first opened no one really knew what Neapolitan pizza was," he explains. "Some people actually brought it back asking for a refund, because they were expecting heavy pizzas with lots of things on it."

Wanting to help customers understand that he wasn't just skimping on toppings, he wrote to the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana (VPN), asking for its backing. The non-profit organisation was founded in Naples in the mid-80s to "promote and protect true Neapolitan pizza", and grants a seal of approval to chefs around the world who can prove they are creating authentic Neapolitan pizza.

There are many, many regulations involved in meeting this criteria: from specific ingredients that must be used – San Marzano tomatoes grown in the shadows of Mt Vesuvius, for example – to the way the dough must be hand-kneaded and stretched without the use of a rolling pin or mechanical device. It took Kevin a year of phone calls, photos and videos to convince the association that he ticked all the boxes.





ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Kevin drizzles olive oil in the shape of a six; rules stipulate the pizza must be cooked in 90 seconds or less.

"I'd send them a video and they'd reply saying: 'We like the way you do this, but that was wrong. Can you try it again?' By the end of a year I thought they were just trying to wear me out so I'd give in and they didn't have to say no."

But the nod from Naples eventually came and Dante's became the first VPN-certified pizzeria in New Zealand (under Kevin's supervision, Pizza Pomodoro in Wellington has since been certified as well). Word spread and his authentic Neapolitan pizza has been flying out the door ever since. "As soon as the certificates arrived, suddenly the pizza was amazing," he laughs.

Kevin has since moved from Kumeu after being headhunted by the developer of Auckland's popular eatery hub Ponsonby Central, and in April will open a second, larger restaurant across the bridge in Takapuna. In May he will travel to Italy to represent New Zealand at the *Campionato Mondiale Della Pizza* (Pizza World Championships) in Parma. There, Kevin will compete with top pizza chefs from around the world in the 'Pizza Classica' category, where they must make a classic Margherita pizza.

It sounds simple enough. A Margherita has only three toppings: tomato sauce, mozzarella and basil, after all. But of course with Neapolitan pizza it never is that simple.

"You have to arrive in Parma three days before the competition to go shopping for ingredients," says Kevin. "They follow you to see where you go and what you buy, and then watch you make the dough."



On the day he will be given 15 minutes to make the pizza, present it to the judges and clean down the kitchen.

"They look at everything," he says. "The pH level of the dough has to be correct, it has to be the right colour, the right aroma, it has to have the right amount of olive oil and cheese, the crust has to be a certain height and have the right crunch... Oh God," he pauses. "I'm getting nervous now just talking about it."

At the end of our interview, I suggest that Kevin might like to get some extra practice in for the competition by making a Margherita for me.

Moments later he's in the kitchen, gently encouraging a ball of dough into a disc with his fingertips. The dough is then deftly stretched and slapped on the bench in a special technique he assures me is "more complicated than it looks" (it looks complicated), then topped with a spoonful of hand-crushed tomatoes, fresh basil and slices of buffalo mozzarella. Finally, he adds a swirl of olive oil in the shape of a six, before sliding the pizza into the 450°C brick oven.

The pizza that emerges (in 90 seconds or less, as VPN rules stipulate) has a crispy, blistered crust and a molten, gooey centre. Kevin explains how to unhook the corners of a slice and fold it down the middle, so that when I lift it to my mouth the toppings don't slide straight onto my lap.

Fancy certificate or not, it's hard to believe anyone could ever have created a pizza like this. The sauce tastes uncommonly bright and clean, the mozzarella is silky and the dough chewy and flavourful. For better or for worse, it's the kind of pizza that could ruin all others forever.

"You know," says Kevin, who has readily accepted my offer of a slice, "that taste and smell still takes me back to when I was a kid in Genoa."

It's clear that when Kevin closes his eyes and imagines a pizza, it's his grandfather's Margherita that he sees. ◉

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The WISE TOMATOES *of* SUMMER

Chef JONNY SCHWASS advocates for the proper treatment of this seasonal delight.

If you were to ask my wife about our daughter's name, she would say she is named after her great-grandmother, a wonderful woman who lived well into her 90s.

If you were to ask me how we decided on our daughter's name, I would say that Roma is named after a delicious, open-pollinated bush vine plum tomato, low in acid and perfect for sauces.

It's safe to say I have a healthy obsession with tomatoes – they are the cornerstone of all good Italian cooking and a fruit that is often poorly treated in the name of presentation over flavour. Tomatoes are often picked unripe for the purpose of easier storage and transportation. The poor treatment and harsh conditions continue as they are forced to ripen, against their will, with the addition of ethylene. When anything is forced to ripen away from its mother vine it will become disgruntled and will always sacrifice flavour over form. Tomatoes ripened like this have almost no flavour, an unwelcome jellied scone density, a starchy texture and are an underwhelming shadow of what they could have been. Sure, they look like a tomato – they could even make the cover of *Good Looking Tomato Weekly* – but in all honesty you'd get more enjoyment from eating the fictitious magazine than a tomato forced to ripen in this way.

Tomatoes need warmth, sunlight and lots of water to ripen properly. It is a tough fruit to crop correctly as not every fruit on every vine ripens at the same time. Throw in the fact that there are over 7500 varieties of the same plant and you get an idea of why I love its diversity and challenge. The best producers in New

Zealand are, without doubt, the beautiful folk at Curious Croppers and I would encourage you to seek out their fruit when next in the mood for a tomato feast.

Should you enjoy the challenge of a good home-grown tomato, you will hopefully have a few still to ripen after this long, hot summer.

It's safe to say I have a healthy obsession with tomatoes – they are the cornerstone of all good Italian cooking and a fruit that is often poorly treated in the name of presentation over flavour.

Leave the fruit out for as long as you can to develop as much flavour as it can. A ripe tomato, bursting at the seams with flavour and juice, will never make it to the supermarket shelves as they are impossible to stack in large displays. These 'sauce' tomatoes are often dumped or discounted by the box – I am rarely happier than when I see a roadside market selling them for 50 cents a kilo.

As ugly as they look at this late stage of their life, it is when they yield the most juice and are the sweetest. Small kisses of white mould can put some people off these geriatric fruit, but I liken this to the mould on a good cheese. To me, the distinguished white spots signal the fruit's mature flavour. It's as if they are

wise with flavour, their skin wrinkled with wisdom and their once shiny exterior now a little battered and a little bruised. But, as with our own wise elders, this is when they have the most 'information', or rather 'flavour', to share.

It is safe to say that in my eyes an over-ripe tomato is far superior to an unripe one. If you have ever eaten a chain store burger or sandwich in the depths of winter you will recognise the texture of these unripe, cheeky imitators of the wise tomatoes of summer.

One of my favourite ways to capture the flavour of late summer is by making a tomato water – a simple uncooked method of getting the most from your uber-ripe fruit.

1. Remove any stems or vine from the fruit
2. Slice and season generously with table salt as this helps draw out extra juice
3. Purée in batches in your food processor
4. Line a large colander with a layer of cheesecloth and place over a bowl. Tip in all the puréed fruit. As it drips through it will yield a light coloured consommé (Sounds fancy, but it really just means it's clear.) Patience is the key to success here. Do not refrigerate at this stage, as you will lose all the flavour.
5. After watching a movie and having eight hours of sleep return to your tomato water, check the seasoning and adjust with a little salt or cayenne pepper if required.
6. Store in a sealed bottle as it will oxidise quickly if left in the exposed air.

This is a great addition to simple seafood dishes, a wonderful light chilled sauce for a crayfish salad, or as a replacement for olive brine in a Dirty Martini. ◉

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DINE WITH DISH with OSTRO and CROSSROADS

Join us for a very special night with Crossroads and Josh Emmett at Ostro restaurant.

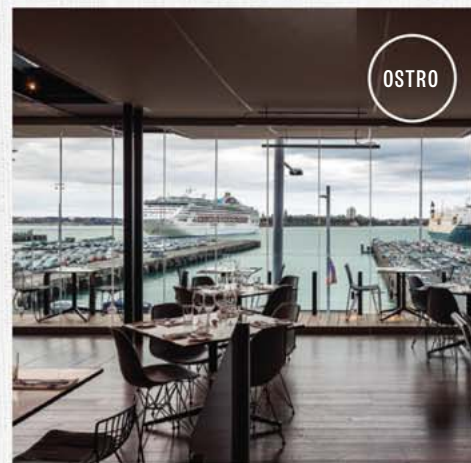
Don't miss the chance to experience wines from Crossroads matched with a very special menu at Ostro Brasserie and Bar.

The evening will be hosted by *Dish* editor Lisa Morton and Crossroads winemaker Miles Dinneen, who will guide diners through the food and wine matches. The four course menu will be designed by Josh Emmett, who will be in attendance, and executed by Ostro head chef Cobus Klopper. Each course will be matched with a selection of Crossroads wines.

For over 20 years, Crossroads has brought wine lovers the very best of small parcel Hawke's Bay winemaking from its vineyards and winery. Crossroads has six purpose-designed vineyards in selected sub-regions of Hawke's Bay, including four in the Gimblett Gravels. These vineyards shape the essence of Crossroads.

2015 marks Crossroads' 25th anniversary, and to celebrate they are releasing an exclusive Syrah which guests at Dine with *Dish* will have a chance to try. Guests will also be the first to try wines from the 2013 'Winemakers Collection' series - made using the very best parcels of fruit, carefully selected and crafted with passion - as well as Crossroads' signature wine, Talisman. Talisman is a secret blend known only to winemaker Miles Dinneen; it is a unique embodiment of the very best wine the Hawke's Bay vineyards have to offer.

Ostro Brasserie and Bar is located in the stunning Seafarers Building in Britomart, boasting sweeping views of both the Waitemata Harbour and the city. Book now - this Dine with *Dish* event promises to be a unique experience of premium wines and fantastic food.



EVENT DETAILS

WHERE:

Ostro Brasserie & Bar,
Tyler Street, Auckland, 1010

WHEN:

6.30pm

Monday 8th of June, 2015

PRICE:

\$125 per person
(includes four courses with
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Dish Tasting Panel —

LOW ALCOHOL 'SESSION' BEER

Low alcohol need not mean low in flavour – the Dish Tasting Panel finds the best examples of locally brewed beers that won't hit you for six.

The term “session beer” has been bandied about with increasing regularity in recent years. A search of the online Urban Dictionary reveals this use of “session” as: “A beer that is low in alcohol and has a balanced flavour of both hops and malt. The purpose being so that it can be drunk over a long session of time without overwhelming the palate or getting the drinker too intoxicated. i.e. A light-bodied summer ale would make a good session beer.”

Interestingly, to call a beer ‘low-alcohol’ it must be under 1.15% alcohol by volume (abv). Whereas a beer over 1.15% and under 3% abv must be described as ‘light’, which is potentially confusing as ‘light’ can mean light in calories, light in carbs, light in body or colour, as well as light in alcohol. But what is the upper level cut-off point for a beer to be considered a “session beer”? Internationally, there appears to be two schools of thought: those who say 5% abv and those appealing for 4.5% abv and below.

Much of the craft beer that comes our way is significantly higher in alcohol than your standard commercial beer, with levels of 6-8% being quite normal. In light of the revision of New Zealand's drink drive laws last December – which lowered the alcohol limit from 400 micrograms of alcohol per litre of breath to 250 micrograms for drivers over 20 – the idea of finding a tasty brew that won't send you sideways has become all the more appealing.

For our tasting we made the call to cap the level at 5% abv, which our judges felt was still quite high generally speaking, but relatively low for the ‘craft’ beer crowd.

Could we find gold medal winners amongst the 80 entries we received? We certainly did. In fact, the majority of our medal-winning



entries weighed in below 4.6%, which our judges felt was more in line with what Kiwi session beers should be. It was also heartening to see a third of our top 12 beers available in a variety of packaging variants: ‘squealers’ (945ml bottles), 500ml bottles, and 330ml bottles and cans.

It wasn't all beer and skittles for our judges as they assessed the 80 entries though. Alcohol can mask all sorts of faults and failings so, when there's less of it, less desirable characteristics are often revealed.

There's also the problem (which occurred in many of the ‘light’ entries) of the beer appearing ‘thin’ or ‘empty’ in the mid-palate.

We do need to point out that due to logistical issues our Dish tastings involve only locally produced bottled beer. So this tasting certainly does not reflect all the lower alcohol examples on the market today, as there are many superb examples on tap that we'd encourage you to try.

All the beers were tasted blind and under competition conditions, thanks to Janet Blackman, Cameron Douglas MS and their exceptionally skilled team in the back room. Upon final reveal, a judge's score for his or her own entry had to be less than or equal to the scores of the other senior judges and adjusted accordingly.



THE JUDGES

(clockwise from top left)

Yvonne Lorkin – Dish drinks writer

Cameron Douglas MS –
Senior Lecturer AUT and
Master Sommelier

Michael Donaldson –
author of *Beer Nation*

Søren Erikson – Brewer and
owner 8 Wired Brewing

Alex Biederman (associate judge) –
National Brand Ambassador, DB

(NB: all beers are judged blind and the
scores of judges for their own beers cannot
exceed those of other judges.)

RATING SYSTEM:

GOLD ★★★★★

Superb. Strongly recommended.

SILVER ★★★★

A cut above the rest in quality.

BRONZE ★★★

A good-quality crowd pleaser.



Look for the Dish
Tasting Panel selection
sticker, which can be
worn by our top beers.

With thanks to Janet Blackman and
Cameron Douglas from the Professional
Wine Studies Department and the AUT
School of Hospitality and Tourism. For
more on the programmes in hospitality,
food and beverage, and hotel management
visit www.aut.ac.nz

Water kindly supplied by Antipodes.



Dish Tasting Panel — low alcohol 'SESSION' BEER

1. 8 WIRED

SemiConductor Session IPA 4.4%
(330ml, \$15.99, 4 pack) ★★★★★

Bright and golden in the glass, with
sweetness on the nose. "Honeydew,"
added Michael. Bold, resinous
bitterness in the mid-palate, this beer
had sensational length but it was the
balance and cleansing character that
dominated the judges' notes. That so
much flavour and presence can be packed
into something under 4.5% is testament
to Søren's skill as a brewer – although
he was very embarrassed when it was
revealed his beer had taken the top gong.

2. TUATARA BREWING

Bohemian Pilsner 5% (500ml, \$6.99)
★★★★★

"Moreish and drinkable, with subtle hops
and good body," noted Søren. Alex and
Michael felt this European-style pilsner
also showed superb balance, structure
and beautiful tangy bitterness.

3. KERERU BREWING COMPANY

Moonless Stout 4.5% (500ml, \$8)
★★★★★

This inky-dark stout with its cappuccino-
coloured head had rich peaty, tobacco-
like aromas, roasted nutty notes and a
smooth cocoa-coated character. "Deeply
textured, well rounded and with a sultry
edge," noted Michael.

4. SAWMILL BREWING CO.

Pale Ale 4.5% (500ml, \$8.50) ★★★★

Scented with mandarin peel and boasting
bold, tangy, resinous hop notes in the
mid-palate, this pale ale is balanced in
body and has an elegantly flavoursome
finish. "Solid length of flavour,"
commented Yvonne.

5. GOOD GEORGE BREWING

Sparkling Ale 4.5% (946ml, \$13.99)
★★★★★

"Refreshing," noted Søren and the other
judges agreed. But make no mistake –



there are big hops aplenty here. Sweet grapefruit and lemon verbena characters merge with a creamy lemon curd, fennel and nutty notes. Michael also remarked on the long, balanced finish.

6. GARAGE PROJECT

Hāpi Daze Pacific Pale Ale 4.6% (330ml can, \$19.99, 6 pack) ★★★★★

“This is a showcase for New Zealand hops,” commented Alex, our associate judge. With burned orange colour and lifted citrus oil hop aromas, the palate is ultra-fresh with zesty citrus peel and peachy notes, a cleansing texture and is nicely balanced with a tongue tingling finish.

7. EMERSON'S BREWING CO.

Dinner Bell 3.2% (500ml, \$7.70) ★★★½

This champagne-coloured Belgian Table Beer is “lean, spritzy and boasting just the right amount of sour,” according to Michael, while Søren applauded its bright, citrusy aroma. This definitely fitted the “nice, sessionable, easy drinking style” for Alex. If you’re new to sour beers, this is a great introduction.

8. DEEP CREEK BREWING CO.

Undercurrent Pilsner 5% (330ml, \$4.20) ★★★½

All the judges commented on the refreshing, well-balanced hoppy flavours and “snappy bitterness”. The Undercurrent has some definite mid-palate depth and citrus pith notes on the finish. Good stuff.

9. KERERU BREWING COMPANY

For Great Justice, Wood Fired Toasted Coconut Porter 4.5% (500ml, \$8) ★★★½

Clean, attractive coconut and toast aromas lead to a silky, refreshing Porter-style beer that has real interest and personality in the mid-palate and finish. This is a dark beer that has lightness, juiciness and ‘easy drinking’ written all over it.

10. RENAISSANCE BREWING

Empathy Pale Ale 2.5% (500ml, \$4) ★★★

There’s an earthy, almost hay-like character to the hop aromas in this light-bodied beer. It has a surprisingly persistent length of flavour for such a low level of alcohol – it’s certainly an attractive example of what can be done for less.

11. KERERU BREWING COMPANY

Maidstone Lager 5% (500ml, \$8) ★★★

An orange-bronze colour and boasting a pillowy head, orange oil hop and biscuit malt notes on the nose, this beer has gamey, almost smoke-like notes and sweet generosity in the mouthfeel.

12. KERERU BREWING COMPANY

Karengose Salty Seaweed Ale 4% (500ml, \$8) ★★★

Big and briny, this unusual brew has salty-sour mineral “hot rocks” complexity, “tea-like” tannins and a rich, satisfying presence on the finish. Wacky, but nicely drinkable.

KERERU KORERO

Having crafted a third of our medal-winning beers, you’d think there was something in the water at Kereru Brewing in Maidstone, Upper Hutt. But it’s much more than that, says brewer Christopher Mills. “I’d like to think most of our beers are sessionable... such that you can enjoy two or three over a meal with friends. We use New Zealand Gladfield malts, locally-grown hops, and many other New Zealand-grown ingredients to celebrate the marvellous qualities and flavours which are part of our local landscape.

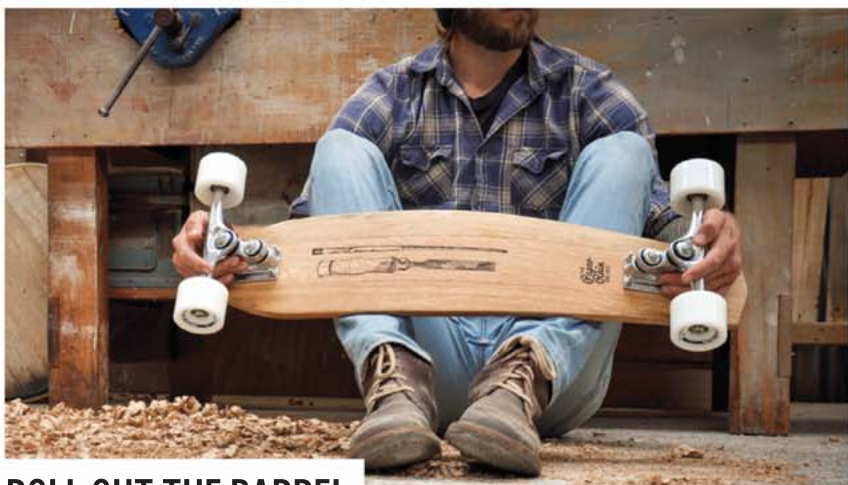
“Natasha (Christopher’s wife and business partner) had the idea for making Karengose. She tasted purple karengo fronds and suggested we make a beer using them. I looked up beer styles that would support the briny taste of the seaside. Maidstone Lager came from enjoying Mexican food and the refreshing beers that go well with it, and to celebrate sport in Upper Hutt. Our coconut Porter, ‘For Great Justice’ wouldn’t exist without the amazing wood-fired pizza oven at Art of Pizza, made and operated by our friend Chris Chevalier. Manuka wood smoke infuses the coconut with a depth of character you can’t get any other way... [and] Moonless Stout is inspired by several classic stouts I have enjoyed over the years.”





BY THE GLASS

We say cheers to Nelson's new Hop and Beer Museum, low-alcohol wines take the prize, and new release meads are the perfect autumnal tippie – YVONNE LORKIN rounds up the latest from the world of drinks.



ROLL OUT THE BARREL

What do you do with old oak barrels that have outlived their use in winemaking? You could do the predictable: cut it in half, fill it with potting mix and let some parsley go nuts; you could even turn the ends into enormous wooden platters for cheese and such, or fashion up some funky outdoor furniture. Or, if you're artistically inclined like Indigo Greenlaw and Wills Rowe from Marlborough, you carve them into coolness on wheels. The couple, whose business is called The Paper Rain Project, create long-deck skateboards from the oak staves, put unique laser-etched graphics on the smooth base and use crushed glass for grip on the top. The ethos of the business, which began as a t-shirt design and custom board-making enterprise, is recycling and up-cycling natural products through art and design.

Visit www.thepaperrainproject.co.nz

Easy tiger

Thirteen Marlborough wine companies have invested in the Lifestyle Wines partnership with the Ministry of Primary Industries and New Zealand Winegrowers, a seven year programme to create high-quality low-alcohol, low-calorie wines in a natural way. It's the largest Research and Development project ever conducted by New Zealand's viticulture sector, and so far the results are something to crow about.

Lovers of sauvignon blanc have a tasty low-alcohol option (9%) in 2013 Forrest 'Doctor's' Sauvignon Blanc, which scooped a gold medal in the prestigious Sydney Top 100 wine competition last November. "For us, that's probably the greatest achievement of the year; competing against open class, full alcohol sauvignons is huge," says John Forrest.

Spy Valley has just released Easy Tiger, a low-alcohol sauvignon blanc which, at just 9.5%, has around 30 per cent fewer calories than their standard estate sauvignon and I think it's one of the best examples of its type on the market today.

Low-alcohol wine has typically been produced by extracting alcohol from finished wine via a process of reverse osmosis, which has occasionally led to less than fabulous results. What the Lifestyle Wines programme is trying to achieve is ways to create high quality, low-alcohol wines naturally via sustainable viticultural techniques, canopy management, native yeasts and fermentation trials. "We want to see what we can learn in regards to viticulture and winemaking development, to be at the leading edge of innovation," says Blair Gibbs, Spy Valley's General Manager. "Taking on board global trends of alcohol use and social responsibility, keeping quality at the forefront, it was a natural progression to get involved in the Lifestyle programme."

WORDS OF WISDOM — James Millton, Gisborne-based pioneer of biodynamic viticulture, had these pearls of wisdom for a more earthly approach to 2015: "When walking in one's vineyard, we are not actually walking on dirt but on the rooftop of another kingdom, so tread carefully." "The best way to see the health of a grapevine is to lie under it in the shade, on a bright Gisborne summer's day." "An insect is not a pest, it's a messenger. So ask it what it is doing there and what you may have done to make its presence shown." "To make fine wine you need to drink a lot of craft beer." "Eat, drink and be driven."



RICCADONNA GOES PROSECCO

One of our fave Asti brands has branched out with a new release Prosecco available now in our supermarkets and liquor stores. Made exclusively with Prosecco (Glera) grapes produced in the officially designated Prosecco area between Conegliano Veneto and Valdobbiadene in Italy's Veneto region, this is a crisp, light (11% alcohol) and deliciously dry sparkling wine with a splash of stonefruit, white floral notes and boasts a mineral-driven finish.

Night at the museum

Nelson can now back up its claims of being the craft brewing capital of New Zealand with the opening of a snazzy new Hop and Beer Museum in Founders Park.

The museum shows how early brewing began in the region over 170 years ago, with the first recorded brewery established in 1843. Separated into three main areas (the Hop Kiln, Brew House and Office), the displays focus on the first 100 years of

Nelson's regional brewing story.

Visitors have the opportunity to explore its brewing heritage before popping next door to enjoy one of the top craft beers of the region, all within a working brewery. The new facility and exhibition was funded by proceeds from the annual Founders Park Book Fair fundraising event and support from New Zealand Hops Limited, as well as many generous hours given by local volunteers and brewing enthusiasts.



***CERTIFIED** — A 'well done, sir' to Josh Scott, who passed the Certified Cicerone® exam recently. He's the first in New Zealand to be certified, only the second in Australasia and plans to do his Masters later this year. The term Cicerone (pronounced sis-uh-rohn) has been chosen to designate those with proven expertise in selecting, acquiring and serving today's wide range of beers – and this qualification is major. Josh started Moa Brewing 12 years ago and now he's on a mission to become one of the best trained beer palates in the industry.*



The Legend of Te Mata

2013 is being touted as "the vintage of the century", "...a generation" and even "...a lifetime" by winemakers in Hawke's Bay. Arguably the most famous red wine New Zealand has ever produced, and in its 31st vintage, the Te Mata Coleraine 2013 is therefore the most widely anticipated New Zealand wine release I've experienced. I tasted the wine just prior to its launch on March 1 and, cutting to the crux of the matter, the 2013 Coleraine (\$99) is stunning; so precise, so poised and elegant it's less of a drink and more of an emotional moment.



Mead me tonight

Mark Atkin of Bemrose Estate has just released his new Red Mead and new premium reserve honey mead called Excaliber. The Red Mead (\$22) is a blend of honey, boysenberry and plum wine that's a sweet, spicy, velvety-smooth autumn afternoon treat. The Excaliber (\$27) is based on Atkin's wintermeade recipe of blending manuka and other native honeys and then aging the wine in toasted French oak barrels. They're both unique honey wines that pair beautifully with strong cheeses, dried figs and charcuterie. Visit www.wildfern.co.nz

KA-RUNCH



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RECIPES

What we're cooking in this issue of Dish



Dish Food Editor
CLAIRE ALDOUS
brings a taste of
Italy to your table.

60 FLAVOURS TO SAVOUR

Soak up the late summer days with these menu ideas for long lunches that could easily keep everyone talking until dinner.

72 RIPE FOR THE PICKING

Harvest time means an abundance of produce at its very best, so give it a starring role in these delicious recipes.

84 SAY CHEESE

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94 MADE IN ITALY

The classic staples of pasta, polenta and risotto inspire foodwriter Sarah Tuck after her Italian travels.

105 SHAPE MATTERS

Explore the wide world of pasta with this handy guide to the myriad of pasta shapes and their ideal sauces.

108 EASY EVERYDAY

Italian flavours lend themselves beautifully to making simple and delicious dinners for any night of the week.



Recipes and food styling by Claire Aldous
Props styling by Lianne Whorwood
Styling by Lisa Morton and Lianne Whorwood
Drink matches by Yvonne Lorkin



flavours to SAVOUR

It might be a long lunch for *Mother's Day* or a family gathering at Easter, either way these menu ideas will keep guests at the table well into the afternoon.



RED GRAPE AND
BALSAMIC MOSTADA
[recipe next page]

SIMPLE PORK TERRINE
[recipe next page]



MELON AND PROSCIUTTO
BRUSCHETTA

Melon and Prosciutto Bruschetta

A simple and refreshing starter that adapts easily into a light meal by adding a salad.

10 slices sourdough bread	2 tablespoons chopped mint
1 clove garlic, crushed	zest 1 lemon
150 grams creamy feta cheese	lemon juice
10 slices prosciutto	honey
½ rockmelon, peeled and seeded	olive oil
50 grams whole roasted skin-on almonds	sea salt and ground pepper

Grill or toast the bread and rub one side with the garlic.

Spread the toasts with the feta then top each one with a piece of prosciutto.

Shave thin slices of melon using a vegetable peeler and place a couple of slices on top.

Chop the almonds roughly then add the mint and lemon zest and chop together.

Squeeze a little lemon juice over each bruschetta then a drizzle of honey and olive oil. Scatter over the nut mixture and season. Serve immediately. **Makes 10**

Red Grape and Balsamic Mostada

Use this versatile Italian chutney with cold meats, pâté, cheese, or as an accompaniment to salads.

2 tablespoons olive oil	2 teaspoons yellow mustard seeds
1 small red onion, chopped finely	¼ teaspoon chilli flakes
2 cloves garlic, crushed	1 teaspoon finely chopped rosemary
3 cups seedless red grapes	finely grated zest and juice 1 orange
2 tablespoons brown sugar	¼ cup water
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar	sea salt

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan and cook the onion and garlic with a good pinch of salt until tender. Add all the remaining ingredients and bring to the boil.

Reduce the heat and simmer gently for 40–50 minutes until well reduced and the juices are rich and thick. Stir frequently to prevent it catching on the base of the pan. Cool and keep refrigerated but return to room temperature for serving.

Makes about 1½ cups

Simple Pork Terrine

This is essentially shredded braised pork well flavoured with aromatics, bound together with the reduced cooking liquor and packed into a loaf tin. It's one of the best terrines I've ever made.

1 kilogram piece boned pork shoulder, skin on	To assemble
1 kilogram piece pork belly, skin on	finely grated zest of 1 large lemon
6 cloves garlic, peeled	1 teaspoon grated nutmeg
4 big sprigs thyme	2 tablespoons finely chopped capers
3 bay leaves	2 tablespoons finely chopped gherkins
4 cups chicken stock	sea salt and ground pepper
1 teaspoon sea salt	
ground pepper	7 cup-capacity loaf tin lined with a double layer of plastic wrap, leaving a good overhang down each side

Preheat the oven to 150°C.

Place the pork belly skin side down in the base of a large casserole dish or ovenproof saucepan. Cut the shoulder into 6 pieces and add to the dish along with all the remaining ingredients.

Place a piece of baking paper over the meat then cover with a tight fitting lid or foil.

Braise for about 3 hours, stirring every hour until the meat is meltingly tender when pierced with a skewer.

Tip the contents of the pan into a large strainer set over a saucepan and allow all the liquids to drain through.

Bring the cooking stock to a boil then cook until reduced by ⅔. *I started with 6 cups and had 2 cups after reduction.* Season the stock if needed after it's reduced.

Set the meat aside until just cool enough to handle but still very warm, as this makes it easier to shred.

Discard the skin and excess fat along with the thyme stalks. Keep the soft garlic to add to the meat and the bay leaves for garnish. Use two forks to shred the meat until no solid pieces of pork remain.

To assemble: Add all the remaining ingredients to the shredded pork and season very generously with salt and pepper. Add the reduced stock and mix so the pork is well coated.

Place the reserved bay leaves in the base of the tin and add the pork, pressing firmly with a fork to compact well.

Pull the plastic wrap tightly over the top and chill for at least 12 hours and up to 4 days.

To serve: Remove from the tin and cut into slices to serve. I served ours with the Red Grape and Balsamic Mostada, grilled bread, mustard and cornichons. **Serves 10–12**



Mixed Olive Antipasti

Transform plain olives into a visual and tasty feast of antipasti by warming them gently in olive oil, citrus and spices – add crusty bread for dipping in the golden hued oil.

3 cups mixed olives	3 cloves garlic, sliced
1 cup olive oil	1 medium carrot, sliced ½ cm thick
1 teaspoon each whole aniseed and fennel seeds	2 medium stalks celery, sliced ½ cm thick
¼ teaspoon chilli flakes	6 pieces sundried tomato, sliced thinly
1 teaspoon smoked sweet paprika	long strips of zest from 1 orange and 1 lemon
2 good sprigs rosemary	

Put all the ingredients in a large sauté pan and place over a low heat. Gently warm through for 10 minutes to infuse the flavours, but don't let it come to the boil as you want the celery and carrot to stay crisp.

Cool, then transfer to a container and store in the fridge for up to 3 weeks, stirring occasionally. Bring back to room temperature to serve. **Makes 4 cups of antipasti**

Artichoke, Ham and Herb Tart

This easy mix and bake tart is a wonderful carrier for a myriad of flavours. Add olives and capers, smoked fish in place of the ham, roasted diced pumpkin or red capsicum, cooked potatoes... the combinations are endless.

2 tablespoons olive oil	¾ cup milk
1 leek, sliced thinly	¾ cup cream
1 onion, sliced thinly	1 cup grated aged Cheddar cheese
2 cloves garlic, crushed	¼ cup chopped herbs (I used basil and mint)
2 teaspoons finely chopped rosemary or thyme	sea salt and ground pepper
250 grams leg ham, diced	To finish
1 x 275 gram jar chargrilled artichokes, drained and quartered	Parmesan for grating
3 eggs	26cm baking dish lined with baking paper, bringing it right up the sides to contain the filling
¼ cup plain flour	
½ teaspoon baking powder	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Heat the oil in a large sauté pan and cook the leek, onion, garlic and rosemary with a good pinch of salt until tender. Add the ham and artichokes and cook for another 2 minutes. Cool.

Whisk the eggs, flour and baking powder together until smooth then whisk in the milk and cream and season well. Add all the remaining ingredients and combine well. Tip into the dish, distributing the ingredients evenly.

Bake for 35 minutes until puffed and golden and firm to the touch and with no raw egg in the centre..

Cool for 20 minutes before serving or serve at room temperature topped with extra Parmesan if using. **Serves 6–8**

COOK'S TIP: The tart is best eaten on the day of baking as refrigeration dulls the flavours.



ARTICHOKE, HAM
AND HERB TART



BRAISED LAMB WITH
WHITE BEANS

Braised Lamb with White Beans

Lamb shoulder chops have a fantastic flavour and become meltingly tender when slow braised with aromatics and wine. Lamb shanks would also be delicious in this recipe.

20 grams dried porcini mushrooms	4 bay leaves
2 cups boiling water	small handful sage leaves
1 kilogram lamb shoulder chops	1 cinnamon stick
½ cup plain flour	1 x 400 gram tin cherry tomatoes
olive oil	sea salt and ground pepper
2 large onions, sliced	To finish
2 carrots, diced	2 x 400 gram tins cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup white wine	2 tablespoons chopped parsley
6 cloves garlic, peeled	

Preheat the oven to 150°C.

Rip the mushrooms into small pieces and place in a heatproof bowl. Pour over the boiling water and let them soak for 30 minutes.

Dust the chops in seasoned flour, shaking off the excess.

Heat a couple of tablespoons of oil in a sauté pan and brown the chops on both sides. Do this in batches, adding a little more oil to the pan if needed. Transfer to a large casserole or baking dish.

Add the onions and carrots to the pan with a splash of water and a good pinch of salt. Cover and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Increase the heat and add the wine, letting it bubble up until reduced by half.

Add the mushrooms and the soaking water along with all the remaining ingredients and bring to the boil. Season then tip the contents of the pan over the chops, spreading it evenly. Cover with a piece of baking paper then a lid or foil, sealing tightly.

Bake for 1½ hours then uncover and stir in the cannellini beans. Bake for a further 30 minutes or until the meat is falling off the bone. Stir in the parsley just before serving.

Serves 6–8

COOK'S TIP: As with most braised dishes the lamb is even better if cooked a day or two ahead of serving. Cool then cover and chill. Lift off any excess fat that has set on top and discard. Cover and reheat in a 180°C oven until piping hot.



LEMON ROASTED POTATOES
[recipe next page]



GREEN BEAN, CELERY AND EGG SALAD
[recipe next page]

Lemon Roasted Potatoes

A match made in heaven: potatoes roasted in duck fat with a zesty herb and lemon topping.

1½ kilograms floury potatoes, peeled (I used Agria)	zest and juice 1 large lemon (you need ¼ cup juice)
4 tablespoons duck fat or olive oil	¼ cup packed parsley
	2 cloves garlic, peeled
	sea salt and ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 210°C.

Cut the potatoes into large chunks and cook in plenty of boiling salted water until ¾ cooked with just a little resistance in the middle.

Drain well and place back in the saucepan over a low heat. Shake the pan to roughen up the outside of the potatoes while driving off excess moisture.

Put the fat or oil in a large roasting dish and heat in the oven for 5 minutes. Carefully tip in the potatoes and spread to a single layer. Spoon a little lemon juice over each potato then season generously.

Roast for 30 minutes, turning occasionally until the potatoes are crisp and golden on all sides.

To serve: Chop the lemon zest, parsley and garlic together on a board then sprinkle over the potatoes just before serving.
Serves 4–6

Green Bean, Celery and Egg Salad

Thin slices of tender celery with the young inner leaves add a lovely nutty flavour to the salad and pair beautifully with the eggs and mustardy dressing.

300 grams green beans, stem end trimmed	1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tender inner stalks celery, sliced very thinly	2 tablespoons white balsamic or tarragon vinegar
3 eggs, hardboiled and peeled	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Dressing	3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion	sea salt and ground pepper

Cook the beans in boiling salted water until just tender. Drain and refresh in cold water then pat dry with kitchen towels.

Dressing: Put the onion, garlic and vinegar in a large bowl and leave for 5 minutes.

Whisk in the mustard and olive oil and season well.

To serve: Toss the beans, celery and the tender leaves with the dressing then lift out and transfer to a serving platter. Slice each egg into three and tuck into the beans.

Spoon any dressing and onion left in the bowl over the eggs and grind over a little pepper. **Serves 4**

Florentines (gf)

Gorgeous creamy caramel, crisp nuts and a little tartness from the mixed peel make these a wonderful finale to a meal.

120 grams mixed nuts, chopped roughly (I used almonds and hazelnuts)	1 tablespoon honey
60 grams dried figs, chopped finely	½ teaspoon vanilla extract
40 grams mixed peel	¼ cup caster sugar
3 tablespoons plain flour (use either regular or gluten-free)	2 tablespoons cream
½ teaspoon ground mixed spice	To finish
50 grams butter, diced	80 grams each dark and white chocolate, melted
	12 hole ½ cup-capacity muffin tin, very well greased and bases lined with a circle of baking paper

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

Toss the nuts, figs, mixed peel, flour and mixed spice together in a bowl and set aside.

Put the butter, honey, vanilla, sugar and cream in a medium saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Simmer gently for 3 minutes, stirring often. Take off the heat and add the nut mixture straight away, stirring until everything is well coated in the caramel. Place tablespoons of the mixture in the base of the tins and bake for about 10 minutes until bubbling and golden.

Immediately run a round bladed knife around the edges to loosen them from the side of the tin. *Wipe the blade clean if it becomes sticky.* Cool for 5 minutes so the caramel can set before removing from the tins to a cooling rack.

To finish: Dip a third of each Florentine in each of the melted chocolates, leaving the remaining plain if desired. Place on baking paper to set. **Makes 18**

COOK'S TIP: If using a 6 hole muffin tin, remove the used baking paper from the first batch, wipe out the holes then grease and line again before cooking the second batch. The mixture will have firmed up but just scoop it into the tins and it will melt down when placed in the oven.

PROPS: Shutters from Romantique (www.romantique.co.nz). Plates from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz). Bust from French Country Collections (www.frenchcountry.co.nz). Candelabra from Bashford Antiques (www.bashford.co.nz). Forks from Molloy's of Milford (09 488 7326). **Simple Pork Terrine:** Table and chair from Bashford Antiques. Mustard dish from Tessuti (shop.tessuti.co.nz). Plates from Nest (www.nest-direct.co.nz). Napkin from Madder & Rouge (www.madderandrouge.co.nz). All others from The Props Department. **Melon and Prosciutto Bruschetta:** Platter from Tessuti. Glasses from The Props Department. **Mixed Olive Antipasti:** Napkins from Madder & Rouge. Bowl from Republic Home (www.republichome.co.nz). Green ribbed glasses from Leopold Hall (www.leopoldhall.co.nz). Orla Kiely glasses from Allium (www.alliuminteriors.co.nz). **Artichoke, Ham and Herb Tart:** Platter from Leopold Hall. Forks from Molloy's of Milford. Plates, salt dish and grinder from The Props Department. **Braised Lamb with White Beans:** La Chumba dish, placemat and napkin from French Country Collections. **Lemon Roasted Potatoes:** Bowl and dish from The Props Department. Mat from Republic Home. Napkin from Madder & Rouge. Glass jug and servers from Molloy's of Milford. Green glasses from Leopold Hall. Orla Kiely glasses from Allium. **Green Bean Salad:** Platter and jug from Allium. Servers from Molloy's of Milford. **Florentines:** Tray from Bashford Antiques. Canister from Leopold Hall. Glass dish from Molloy's of Milford. Green napkin from French Country Collections. All others The Props Department. **Chocolate Panna Cotta:** Le Creuset pie dish from Le Creuset (0800 526 974). Bowls from Nest. Spoon from The Props Department. All uncredited props stylist's own. Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com). Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz).



FLORENTINES (GF)



Chocolate Panna Cotta

Silky and indulgent – what's not to love about this dessert?

200 grams good dark chocolate, chopped	100 grams caster sugar
2 leaves gelatine	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
300ml cream	To serve
100ml milk	½ cup cream, softly whipped
	grated chocolate for serving

Soak the gelatin leaves in a bowl of cold water for 10 minutes.

Melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water. *Don't let the base touch the water.* Set aside.

Heat the cream, milk, sugar and vanilla in a medium saucepan until it just comes to a simmer, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Take off the heat.

Lift the gelatin out of the water and squeeze to remove the excess liquid. Add to the hot cream mixture and stir to dissolve.

Gradually whisk the cream into the warm chocolate until smooth. Strain into a serving bowl and refrigerate for 2 hours or until set.

To serve: Top the panna cotta with dollops of cream then grated chocolate. Serve the remaining cream separately.

Serves 6

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



MELON AND PROSCIUTTO BRUSCHETTA

Produced from Glera grapes and ultra-pale, the new Riccadonna Extra Dry Prosecco D.O.C (\$20) is my pick for this classic Italian starter. It boasts a fine, foamy mousse with lifted citrus pith, nutty notes and a long super-dry finish. At 11% alcohol it's ideal for those who like their sparkles chalky and dry. To order visit www.lk.co.nz

SIMPLE PORK TERRINE

Pork and apple are always a winning combo, so reach for a tall glass of the Paynter's Pilgrim's Dry Cider 2014 (500ml, \$10). Crafted from Lemonade and Ballarat apples it's incredibly pure, balanced and oozes character. To order visit www.paynterscider.co.nz

MIXED OLIVE ANTIPASTI

Try a local version of an Italian white for the perfect match with these spiced, herb-laden olives. The Bush Hawk Hawke's Bay Fiano 2014 (\$25) has lifted white floral, lemony herbaceousness and a long lipsmacking finish. To order visit www.trianglecellars.co.nz

ARTICHOKE, HAM AND HERB TART

The Mahurangi River Albariño 2014 (\$28) might be of Spanish origin, but it provides the perfect amount of white peach and pepper flavours to pair with this Italian treat. Add in its super-dry texture and oyster shell minerality on the finish and it's a total no-brainer. To order phone 09 425 0306.

BRAISED LAMB WITH WHITE BEANS

Pair these succulent lamb chops with the explosively good Crossroads Winemakers Collection Hawke's Bay Syrah 2013 (\$39). Its exotic peppery, smoky aromas and ultra-ripe dark berries and spice flavours work amazingly well here. To order visit www.crossroadswines.co.nz

GREEN BEAN, CELERY AND EGG SALAD

Eggs can be tricky, but the tangy vinaigrette with crunchy beans and celery lends itself to a lightly floral wine like the Aronui Nelson Grüner Veltliner 2014 (\$24). It has just the right level of subtle white peach flavours and a flinty, mineral-like mouthfeel to balance the eggs' acidity and richness. To order visit www.aronuiwines.co.nz

FLORENTINES

Extend the honey flavours of these crunchy, sticky, chocolatey treats with a snifter of Bemrose Estate Excaliber Honey Wine (\$27). Honey wine is one of the world's oldest beverages; this modern version is made with no fewer than five native honeys and has a toasty, smoky edge. To order visit www.wildfern.co.nz

CHOCOLATE PANNA COTTA

This swoon-inducing dessert needs nothing more than the Jumping Goat Coffee Infused Whisky Liqueur (\$54) – simply because nothing goes together quite as well as chocolate, coffee and whisky. To order visit www.whiskyandmore.co.nz

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Raspberry Meringue & Marshmallow**

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ripe for the **PICKING**

Whether it's the *centrepiece ingredient* of an entrée, side, main or dessert, make the most of abundant seasonal produce while it lasts.





LEMON SYRUP CAKE
WITH ROASTED GRAPES
[recipe next page]



ROASTED MUSHROOM
AND LENTIL SALAD

Roasted Mushroom and Lentil Salad

This looks like a mountain of mushrooms when raw, but they shrink enormously when roasted and develop a lovely dense, chewy texture.

8 large Portobello mushrooms, peeled and stems trimmed	1 small red onion, very thinly sliced
olive oil	1 x 400 gram tin lentils, drained and rinsed
sea salt and ground pepper	10 cherry tomatoes, halved
Salad	¼ cup pistachios or roasted hazelnuts
4 tablespoons olive oil	good handful herbs (I used mint and parsley)
1 tablespoon tarragon vinegar or white wine vinegar	Parmesan for shaving
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard	
2 cloves garlic, crushed	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Slice the mushrooms 1cm thick. Brush a baking tray with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place the mushrooms on top in a single layer then drizzle with a little oil and season.

Roast for 20–30 minutes, turning halfway through cooking, until they have shrunk and become a little leathery looking. Cool.

Salad: Whisk the oil, vinegar, mustard and garlic together in a large bowl and season.

Add the mushrooms and all the remaining ingredients, except the Parmesan, and toss gently to combine. Transfer to a platter and top with shaved Parmesan. **Serves 4–6**

COOK'S TIP: To give the onions a milder flavour, soak in cold water for 15 minutes then drain and squeeze dry in a clean tea towel.

Roasted Broccoli and Chickpeas with Parmesan

A simple dish that gives broccoli or broccolini a deliciously different taste and texture.

250 grams broccolini	pinch chilli flakes (optional)
1 x 400 gram tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed	sea salt and ground pepper
3 tablespoons olive oil	To serve
2 tablespoons lemon juice	½ cup freshly grated Parmesan or pecorino cheese
2 cloves garlic, crushed	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Combine everything in a large bowl and toss well to coat.

Spread out in a single layer on a large lined baking tray and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 8–10 minutes, turning once, until the broccolini is golden in places and just tender.

Transfer to a serving platter and scatter with the Parmesan or pecorino. **Serves 4**

Lemon Syrup Cake with Roasted Grapes

It's hard to go past a lovely moist lemon cake – and it's even more divine when topped with syrupy roasted grapes and a dollop of cream.

200 grams butter, very soft but not melted	100 grams ricotta
200 grams caster sugar	Lemon syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	¼ cup caster sugar
3 x #7 eggs (large), lightly beaten	¼ cup lemon juice
2 tablespoons yoghurt	¼ cup water
finely grated zest of 1 large lemon	To serve
200 grams plain flour	roasted grapes (recipe below)
1 teaspoon baking powder	mascarpone
2 teaspoons ground ginger	20cm spring form cake tin, greased and base and sides lined with baking paper
¼ teaspoon salt	

Preheat the oven to 150°C.

Syrup: Put all the ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 3 minutes. Set aside.

Cake: Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla until very light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs until well combined then beat in the yoghurt and zest.

Combine the flour, baking powder, ginger and salt and add to the batter along with the ricotta and beat gently to combine. *Don't over mix or the cake will be heavy.*

Spoon into the tin and smooth the top.

Bake for about 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

When the cake comes out of the oven, spoon the syrup evenly over the top then leave to cool completely in the tin.

To serve: Place the cake on a serving plate and pile the roasted grapes on top. Serve with the grape syrup and mascarpone. **Makes 1 cake**

Roasted Grapes

500 grams seedless red grapes	2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons brown sugar	2 tablespoons lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Cut the grapes into small clusters. Combine the sugar, honey and lemon juice in a baking dish. Add the clusters plus any loose grapes and turn to coat in the honey mixture.

Roast for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally until some of the grapes start to pop open. Use a slotted spoon to remove the grapes to a bowl and put the syrup in a jug for serving.

Roasted Tomato, Pumpkin and Capsicum Soup

This rich soup blends the flavours of oven-roasted tomatoes with the fresh aniseed notes of fennel and tarragon. Topped off with a glorious molten cheesy crouton, it makes a wonderful late summer dinner.

1½ kilograms very ripe tomatoes	1 teaspoon ground fennel
1 red capsicum, sliced thinly	1 teaspoon dried tarragon
1 onion, sliced thinly	3 cups stock, vegetable or chicken
300 grams pumpkin, peeled and sliced thinly	sea salt and ground pepper
6 cloves garlic, peeled	To serve
3 tablespoons olive oil	12 slices baguette, ½cm thick
2 teaspoons balsamic or sherry vinegar	olive oil
2 teaspoons brown sugar	1 clove garlic, peeled
	150 grams mozzarella cheese, sliced

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Core and halve the tomatoes then place in a large roasting tray along with the capsicum, onion, pumpkin and garlic. Drizzle over the oil and season generously.

Roast for 40 minutes, turning occasionally until everything is tender and the tomatoes have collapsed and released all of their juices. Pinch off the tomato skins with tongs and discard.

Tip the contents of the roasting dish into a large saucepan, scraping in all the liquid. Stir in all the remaining ingredients and bring to the boil. Season and simmer gently for 30 minutes. *At this point you can leave the soup chunky, mash it roughly with a potato masher as I have done, or process the soup until smooth.*

To serve: Brush the bread with olive oil and bake in the oven until lightly golden. Rub one side with the garlic. Divide the soup between ovenproof soup bowls and arrange the bread on top. Pile the mozzarella on top and place under the grill until golden and bubbling. **Serves 4**

PROPS: Cloche and herb pot from Leopold Hall (www.leopoldhall.co.nz). Tabletop from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz). Stand from Junk and Disorderly (www.junkanddisorderly.co.nz). Tile from Molloy's of Milford (09 488 7326). **Lemon Syrup Cake with Roasted Grapes:** Plate from Junk and Disorderly. Cake fork, glass dish and carafe and glass from Molloy's of Milford. Tablecloth from French Country (www.frenchcountry.co.nz). **Roasted Mushroom and Lentil Salad:** Platter from Republic (www.republichome.co.nz). Servers from Molloy's of Milford. **Roasted Tomato, Pumpkin and Capsicum Soup:** Bowls and board from Nest (www.nest-direct.co.nz). Cloth from Collect Living. Spoon and dish from The Props Department. **Fried Zucchini with Lemon, Chilli and Mint:** Pie dish from Le Creuset (0800 526 974). Oil bottle and tablecloth from French Country Collections. Vintage tile from Molloy's of Milford. **Roasted Broccolini and Chickpeas:** Platter from Leopold Hall. Mat from Republic. Napkin from Collect Living. Servers from the Props Department. **Fennel, Leek and Potato Gratin:** Baker, plates and spoon from The Props Department. Cushion cover used as mat from French Country. Carafe from Leopold Hall. **Baked Sicilian Eggplants:** All from The Props Department. **Eggplant Polpettine:** Plate and bowl from The Props Department. Napkin from Collect Living. **Chorizo and Basil Risotto Stuffed Capsicums:** Platter, napkin and server from the Props Department. **Nectarine Tart:** Platter and plates from Leopold Hall. Bowl from Nest. Cutlery and napkin from The Props Department. All uncredited props are stylist's own. Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz). Meat supplied by Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com).

Fried Zucchini with Lemon, Chilli and Mint

A simple, classic preparation of zucchini that's packed with flavour and sings when topped with a good squeeze of fresh lemon juice.

4-6 medium zucchini	¼-½ teaspoon dried chilli flakes
sea salt	½ teaspoon sea salt
olive oil	¼ cup fresh mint leaves
zest 1 large lemon	lemon for squeezing

Slice the zucchini on the diagonal into ½cm thick long ovals or cut into long strips. Spread out on a tray and sprinkle lightly with salt. *This helps draw out the moisture.* Leave for 15 minutes then pat dry with kitchen towels.

Heat a couple of tablespoons of olive oil in a large sauté pan until very hot. Add the zucchini in batches and cook until a good golden colour on each side. Drain on kitchen towels.

Transfer the zucchini to a shallow bowl. Squeeze over the juice of half a lemon. Combine the lemon zest, chilli and salt and sprinkle over the top then scatter with the mint. **Serves 4**

Fennel, Leek and Potato Gratin

Meltingly tender with just a touch of cream, this is a firm family favourite!

3 tablespoons olive oil	300ml stock, vegetable or chicken
2 medium leeks, sliced thinly	½ cup cream
1 fennel bulb, sliced thinly	½ cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 onion, sliced thinly	sea salt and ground pepper
3 cloves garlic, crushed	
2 tablespoons chopped thyme	8 cup-capacity ovenproof baking dish
900 grams Agria potatoes, sliced thinly	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Heat the oil in a large sauté pan and add the leeks, fennel, onion, garlic and thyme. Season generously, cover and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until the vegetables have started to soften.

Spread half the potatoes in the baking dish and season. Top with half the leek mixture. Repeat with the remaining potatoes, seasoning and leeks. Mix the stock and cream, pour over the layered leek and potato and then scatter over the Parmesan. Cover with a piece of baking paper then cover tightly with foil.

Bake for 40 minutes until tender then uncover and continue cooking until the vegetables are very tender and it is golden. **Serves 6-8**



ROASTED TOMATO, PUMPKIN
AND CAPSICUM SOUP



FRIED ZUCCHINI WITH
LEMON, CHILLI AND MINT



ROASTED BROCCOLINI AND
CHICKPEAS WITH PARMESAN
[recipe previous page]



FENNEL, LEEK
AND POTATO GRATIN



BAKED SICILIAN
EGGPLANTS

Baked Sicilian Eggplants

Eggplant loves gutsy flavours but does need to be really well cooked so it develops a rich, luscious texture – undercooked eggplant is very unpleasant to eat.

2 large oval purple eggplants	Topping
4 large vine tomatoes, sliced	small handful parsley
4 cloves garlic, sliced thinly	2 tablespoons pine nuts, roasted
¼ cup olive oil	2 tablespoons capers
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar	zest 1 lemon
2 tablespoons honey	2 spring onions, sliced thinly
	sea salt and ground pepper
	thick plain yoghurt

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Use a shallow baking dish just large enough to hold the eggplants snugly (once halved), and line it fully with baking paper then drizzle with a little olive oil, salt and pepper.

Cut the eggplants in half lengthways, keeping the stem end intact. Place each half flesh side down on a cutting board and use a sharp knife to cut five long slits from below the stem to the base.

Place the eggplants cut side down in the baking dish. Place two slices of tomato in each slit, then poke in the garlic.

Stir the oil, vinegar and honey together and season generously. Spoon it over the eggplants, letting it run down into the slits.

Bake for about 40–50 minutes, basting every 15 minutes with the pan juices, until very tender.

Cool until just warm or to room temperature.

Topping: Roughly chop the parsley, pine nuts, capers and zest together then mix in the spring onions. Season.

To serve: Dollop spoonfuls of yoghurt on top of the eggplants, then scatter over the topping. **Serves 4**

Chorizo and Basil Risotto Stuffed Capsicums

This risotto is delicious on its own, but also makes a fantastic filling when cooked inside sweet peppers with fresh basil and melting cheese.

4 large capsicums (I used 2 red and 2 yellow)	2 cups chicken stock or water, hot
Risotto	½ cup freshly grated Parmesan
2 tablespoons olive oil	
1 medium onion, chopped finely	large handful basil, chopped roughly
2 cloves garlic, crushed	1–2 balls fresh mozzarella, sliced
250 grams raw chorizo sausages, skins removed	sea salt and ground pepper
1 cup Arborio rice	extra Parmesan for serving
½ cup white wine	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Halve the capsicums through the stem and remove the membrane and seeds. Rub with a little olive oil and season. Place in a roasting dish and bake for 15 minutes. Set aside.

Risotto: Heat the oil in a medium saucepan and cook the onion and garlic with a good pinch of salt until tender. Add the sausages and use a spoon to break the meat up so there are no large pieces. Cook for 4 minutes. Add the rice and turn to combine. Increase the heat and add the wine, stirring until it has been absorbed. Add the stock, season and bring to the boil. Cover, reduce the heat and cook for 20 minutes, stirring once during cooking.

Remove from the heat, stir in the Parmesan and season well. Add the basil then spoon into the capsicums. Top with the mozzarella and a grind of pepper. Bake for 15 minutes until golden.

To serve: Top with extra Parmesan if desired and serve hot or warm. **Makes 8 halves**

COOK'S TIP: I used no-stir Vialone Nano rice, which uses double liquid to rice. If using the stir method you will need about 4 cups of stock.



EGGPLANT
POLPETTINE

Eggplant Polpettine

This has become my new favourite eggplant dish and has wowed friends every time I serve it.

1 large eggplant, about 500 grams	1 cup fresh breadcrumbs
3 tablespoons olive oil	½ cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 medium onion, chopped finely	1 egg, beaten
3 cloves garlic, crushed	sea salt and ground pepper
1 teaspoon ground cumin	To cook
¼ teaspoon chilli flakes	1 cup panko breadcrumbs
¼ cup finely chopped herbs (I used a mix of parsley and mint)	olive oil for frying

Peel the eggplant and dice into 1cm cubes.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large sauté pan and add the onion and garlic with a good pinch of salt. Cover and cook for 8 minutes or until very soft.

Add the remaining oil, the eggplant, cumin and chilli, season and turn to coat in the onion. Cover and cook for 20 minutes, stirring often or until the eggplant is very tender and can be crushed easily with a spoon.

Cool, then stir in the herbs, breadcrumbs, Parmesan and enough of the egg to just bind the mixture together. Taste and season if needed.

To cook: Scoop out walnut-sized balls of the mixture then roll in the panko crumbs. *The mixture is soft so don't worry about making perfect looking balls!*

Heat a little oil in a sauté pan and cook the polpettine until golden on all sides. Drain on kitchen towels.

To serve: Transfer to a serving plate and serve warm topped with extra grated Parmesan if desired.

Serve with a purchased tomato and olive chutney or garlic aioli and lemon wedges if desired. **Makes about 16**

PANTRY NOTE: Panko crumbs are flakey Japanese dried breadcrumbs that create a deliciously crunchy crust. Readily available from supermarkets.



**CHORIZO AND BASIL RISOTTO
STUFFED CAPSICUMS**
[recipe previous page]



NECTARINE TART
[recipe next page]

Nectarine Tart

Crisp buttery pastry topped with slices of juicy stone fruit is always a winner.

Pastry

1¾ cups plain flour

⅓ cup caster sugar

¼ teaspoon sea salt

100 grams chilled butter, diced

1 x large egg

1 x large egg yolk

2–3 tablespoons cold water

To assemble

8–10 firm but ripe peaches, nectarines or peacharines

1 tablespoon melted butter

2 tablespoons crushed biscuit crumbs (I used a crisp ginger nut, but you can use any plain biscuit)

To serve

icing sugar

whipped cream or yoghurt (optional)

30cm pizza tin or loose-bottom tart tin

Pastry: Put the flour, sugar, salt and butter in a food processor and process until it resembles coarse crumbs. Stir the egg, egg yolk and 2 tablespoons of the water together and then add to the dough. Pulse until it just starts to come together, adding the remaining water if necessary.

Tip onto the bench and gently bring together by hand and form into a flat disc. *The dough will feel quite sticky.* Wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured bench and line the tin, ensuring the pastry around the edge of the tin isn't too thin or it will burn quickly. *If the pastry breaks just push it together in the tin – it's very forgiving.*

Chill the pastry again while you slice the fruit into 1cm thick wedges. *I leave the skin on.*

To assemble: Starting from the outside, arrange the fruit in concentric circles over the pastry then fill in the centre. *The fruit should fit very snugly.* Brush the tops with the melted butter then scatter with the crumbs.

Bake for about 25 minutes or until the pastry is golden and crisp and the fruit is just tender. Dust with icing sugar and serve warm or at room temperature with softly whipped cream or thick yoghurt. **Serves 10–12**

PANTRY NOTE: Pizza tins are readily available from most supermarkets and are ideal for this type of tart. The holes in the base ensure the pastry is lovely and crisp when baked.

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



ROASTED MUSHROOM AND LENTIL SALAD

Ultra-ripe and fruity upfront with a soft, earthy, forest-floor spiciness in the mid-palate, the **Decibel Martinborough Pinot Noir 2013 (\$35)** has just the right amount of moreish flavour to complement this savoury salad. Order from www.decibelwines.com

LEMON SYRUP CAKE WITH ROASTED GRAPES

Pair this cake with the exotically sweet **Charcoal Gully Late Harvest Gewurztraminer 2014 (\$29)** from Central Otago. The roast peach, lemon zest, creamed honey and caramel characters make the roasted grapes sing. To order phone 027 645 2240.

ROASTED TOMATO, PUMPKIN AND CAPSICUM SOUP

Choose a lean, mineral-driven white wine with a racy acid spine and hints of apple to pair with the sweetness of the pumpkin. The **Bilancia Hawke's Bay Pinot Gris 2013 (\$24)** is styled like an Italian pinot grigio – and it's awesome with this soup. Order from www.bilancia.co.nz

FRIED ZUCCHINI WITH LEMON CHILLI AND MINT

Go for the subtle, creamy, biscuity notes in the **Zeelandt Breweries Weissbier (500ml, \$9)** with these delicate flavours. The hints of fennel work nicely with the zucchini. To order visit www.moorewilson.co.nz

FENNEL, LEEK AND POTATO GRATIN

Sweetly aromatic with hoppy, citrus pith notes and a spicy, crisp, slightly resinous mouthfeel, the **Giant Brewing Co. NZPA (500ml, \$9)** is super-sippable with this creamy, tender gratin. For stockists email info@giantbrewing.co.nz

BAKED SICILIAN EGGPLANTS

The **Bushmere Estate 2013 'The Italians' (\$25)** is a winner here. A berry-forward blend of Sangiovese and Montepulciano; it's juicy and peppery enough to pair with the tangy tomatoes and topping too. To purchase phone 06 868 9317.

CHORIZO AND BASIL RISOTTO STUFFED CAPSICUMS

The perfect partner here is the **Greywacke Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2014 (\$26)**. It boasts fresh basil and capsicum characters, whilst also being packed with ripe fruit, cut grass and luscious, citrus layers. To order visit www.greywacke.com

EGGPLANT POLPETTINE

The **Sacred Hill Orange Label Merlot Cabernet 2013 (\$19)** has plum, cocoa, smoke and spice notes and a succulent, warming mouthfeel and finish. It compliments the chilli, cumin and salty Parmesan perfectly. Order from www.sacredhill.com

NECTARINE TART

The **Spade Oak Vigneron Late Harvest Viognier 2013 (375ml, \$32)** explodes with apricot, honey, stewed citrus, toffee and butterscotch flavours which are super-nice with this dessert. To order visit www.spadeoak.co.nz



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SAY CHEESE

Luscious in *sweet or savoury* dishes, cheese is
a wonderfully versatile ingredient.



Ricotta, Citrus and Almond Cake (gf)

A beautifully moist cake that's delicious plain or served with a side of warm roasted stone fruits or pears.

100 grams butter at room temperature	⅓ cup caster sugar
⅓ cup caster sugar	70 grams sliced almonds
finely grated zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon	To serve
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	icing sugar
4 eggs, separated	softly whipped cream
240 grams ground almonds	20cm spring-form cake tin, sides and base lined with baking paper
250 grams ricotta (I used Clevedon Valley Buffalo)	

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

Beat the butter, first measure of caster sugar, both zests and the vanilla until pale and creamy. Beat in the egg yolks then the ground almonds.

Add the ricotta and gently mix to combine. *The mixture will be very thick.*

Whisk the egg whites to soft peaks then beat in the second measure of caster sugar until thick and glossy.

Stir a large spoonful of the egg whites through the almond batter to loosen it, then gently but thoroughly fold in the remaining egg whites in two batches. Tip into the tin and smooth the top. Scatter over the almonds.

Bake for 45–50 minutes until golden and firm and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool the cake completely in the tin.

To serve: Dust with icing sugar and serve with softly whipped cream. **Makes 1 cake**





BAKED CANNOLI WITH WHIPPED
RICOTTA, CHOCOLATE
AND PISTACHIOS

Baked Cannoli with Whipped Ricotta, Chocolate and Pistachios

These oven-baked cannoli, while not traditional, are much easier to make than the deep-fried version and are equally delicious. Cook two biscuits at a time as they become crisp rapidly when removed from the oven.

Cannoli	1/3 cup icing sugar
1/4 cup caster sugar	finely grated zest
2 tablespoons honey	1 large lemon
60 grams butter	3 tablespoons finely
3 tablespoons cream	chopped dark chocolate
1/4 teaspoon sea salt	3 tablespoons finely
1/2 cup plain flour	chopped pistachios
Filling	metal cannoli tubes
400 grams firm ricotta (I	(or see below for making
used Clevedon Valley Buffalo)	your own tubes)
1/2 cup cream	

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

Cannoli: Put all the ingredients, except the flour, in a small saucepan over a medium heat and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Remove from the heat and whisk in the flour to make a smooth paste. Transfer to a bowl and chill for 30 minutes. *The paste will thicken when cooled.*

Place two tablespoons of the mixture on a lined flat baking tray, spaced well apart. Dip your fingertips in cold water, shake off excess, then pat each cannoli out to a 10cm circle.

Bake for 6–8 minutes until golden. Remove from the oven and leave for 1–2 minutes until just firm enough to lift without breaking. Place a metal cannoli tube or foil-covered cannelloni shell (see Cook's Tip below) on top and gently fold the biscuit over, pressing gently to seal in the centre. Leave for two minutes seal side down then transfer carefully to a cooling rack and leave to cool completely.

Gently pull the tube out when the shells are cooled and crisp. Repeat to make 10 more cannoli.

Filling: Beat the ricotta, cream, icing sugar and lemon zest together. Spoon or pipe the ricotta into the cannoli.

Combine the chocolate and pistachios and dip each end of the filled cannoli in to coat. Dust with icing sugar and serve immediately as they soften quickly once filled. **Makes 12**

COOK'S TIP: To make cannoli 'moulds', I cover six bought dried cannelloni shells with foil, tucking the ends into the hollow shell, then brush them lightly with flavourless vegetable oil.

Roasted Tomatoes and Mozzarella with Warm Sage and Anchovy Dressing

Smooth, creamy mozzarella is trickled with a dressing of anchovies and capers and a touch of sage and butter for added richness. Serve while still warm with lots of bread for mopping up the luscious juices.

2 large balls fresh	Dressing
mozzarella in whey,	3 tablespoons olive oil
drained (I used Clevedon	1 tablespoon capers
Valley Buffalo)	3 anchovies, chopped finely
12 medium vine	12 sage leaves
tomatoes, stem on	2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 cups frozen broad beans,	2 tablespoons lemon juice
blanched and peeled	1 teaspoon butter
handful rocket leaves	sea salt and ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Place the tomatoes on a roasting tray and roast for about 8 minutes or until the skins have just started to split. Remove from the oven, drizzle with a little olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Dressing: Put the oil, capers, anchovies and sage leaves in a saucepan and cook for 3–4 minutes, until the sage has darkened a little and the anchovies have melted into the oil. Stir in the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in the lemon juice and butter. Taste and season with salt and pepper if needed.

To serve: Rip each mozzarella in half and place one half on each plate. Add the warm tomatoes then scatter over the broad beans.

Spoon the warm dressing over everything, along with a grind of pepper and a pile of the rocket leaves. **Serves 4**





ROASTED TOMATOES AND
MOZZARELLA WITH WARM SAGE
AND ANCHOVY DRESSING
[recipe previous page]



Goat's Cheese Crostini with Fig Relish and Lemon

Tangy goat's cheese crostini is topped with a dollop of sticky fig relish and sweet/sour slices of lemon. Serve as a snack or add a salad for a light lunch.

Lemon	100 grams soft goat's cheese or feta cheese
1 large thin-skinned lemon	honey and olive oil for drizzling
2 tablespoons caster sugar	mint leaves for garnish
1 tablespoon sea salt	sea salt and ground pepper
To assemble	
dried fig and balsamic relish (recipe below)	
8 long slices baguette, toasted	

Lemon: Cut the ends off the lemon then halve through the stem end. Slice each half very thinly, removing any pips. *You should get at least 20 slices per half lemon.* Place in a shallow dish. Combine the sugar and salt and sprinkle over the lemon, turning to coat. Leave for 1 hour, turning every 20 minutes. *Lemons will keep for three days in the fridge.*

To assemble: Spread the baguette with goat's cheese then top with a spoonful of fig relish. Add a few slices of cured lemon and a drizzle of honey and olive oil. Finish with a grind of pepper and some mint. Makes 8

Dried Fig and Balsamic Relish

Serve this simple sticky relish with cold meats, cheese and other charcuterie.

500 grams moist dried figs, stems trimmed off	1 teaspoon ground mixed spice
6 pitted prunes	½ cup balsamic vinegar
¼ cup finely chopped red onion	¾ cup water
1 clove garlic, crushed	sea salt and ground pepper
½ cup cane sugar	2 tablespoons lemon juice

Finely chop the figs and prunes and place in a medium saucepan with all the remaining ingredients, except the lemon juice. Season.

Bring to the boil then simmer gently over a low heat, stirring frequently, for about 20 minutes or until the mixture has reduced to a jam-like consistency. Stir in the lemon juice and crush everything together with a potato masher.

Cool and refrigerate but bring back to room temperature to serve. Relish will keep refrigerated for 3–4 weeks. Makes about 2 cups



GOAT'S CHEESE CROSTINI
WITH FIG RELISH AND LEMON



MOZZARELLA WITH
PICKLED GREEN TOMATO
AND FENNEL SALAD
[recipe next page]



PARMESAN, PAPRIKA AND
ROSEMARY CRACKERS

Parmesan, Paprika and Rosemary Crackers

Moreish with a melt-in-the mouth crumb, serve these crackers with pre-dinner drinks or a cheese board.

1 cup plain flour	60 grams chilled butter, diced
½ teaspoon smoked or plain sea salt	4 tablespoons cream
½ teaspoon smoked paprika	To cook
2 teaspoons finely chopped rosemary	olive oil
⅔ cup freshly grated Parmesan	freshly grated Parmesan
	ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

Place all the ingredients, except the cream, in a food processor and process until well combined. Add the cream and pulse to form a dough.

Roll out on a large piece of baking paper to ½ cm thick. Slide the baking paper onto a flat baking sheet.

To cook: Prick the pastry all over with a fork then brush with a little olive oil and sprinkle generously with Parmesan and a grind of pepper. Chill for 20 minutes until the dough is firm.

Cut into 1½cm wide strips, then in half on the diagonal into shorter strips.

Bake for 10 minutes or until golden, turning the tray for even colouring. *Don't over-bake the crackers or the Parmesan will taste bitter.*

Cool for two minutes then transfer to a cooling rack. **Makes 16 depending on the size**

Mozzarella with Pickled Green Tomato and Fennel Salad

Soft pillows of mozzarella pair beautifully with the lovely anise flavour of fennel and the slight tang of lightly pickled green tomatoes.

½ cup apple cider vinegar	2 medium green tomatoes
¼ cup water	1 medium fennel bulb, tops trimmed
2 tablespoons caster sugar	To serve
1 teaspoon sea salt	2 balls fresh mozzarella in whey, drained (I used Clevedon Valley Buffalo)
1 teaspoon caraway seeds	grilled bread and crackers
½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds	

Put all the ingredients, except the tomatoes and fennel, in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Cool to room temperature.

Thinly slice the tomatoes and fennel (*a mandolin is perfect for this*) and place in a shallow dish. Pour over the cooled liquid and turn to coat the vegetables.

Cover, turning occasionally, and leave for two hours or keep refrigerated for up to three days.

To serve: Slice or rip the mozzarella and place on a serving platter. Lift the vegetables out of the brine, letting the excess drip back into the bowl.

Place on the platter and drizzle everything with good olive oil, ground pepper and sea salt. Serve with grilled bread and crackers. **Serves 6**

The Pickled Green Tomato and Fennel Salad also goes beautifully with the Simple Pork Terrine on page 63.





Two Cheese and Olive Tart

A simple topping of tangy cheese, onion and olives on crisp buttery pastry makes a super-quick lunch or light dinner when served with a salad.

200 grams puff pastry	½ small red onion, very thinly sliced
1 egg yolk	
2 tablespoons cream	1 cup mixed olives
2 cloves garlic, crushed	2 tablespoons small rosemary sprigs
pinch chilli flakes	1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup grated mozzarella	sea salt and ground pepper
100 grams blue cheese, crumbled	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Roll the pastry out to a thin rectangle approximately 32cm x 22cm. Place on a lined flat baking tray and chill or freeze until firm.

Combine the egg yolk, cream, garlic, chilli and both cheeses and spread evenly over the chilled pastry, taking it right to the edges. Season.

Scatter over the onion, olives and rosemary then drizzle with the olive oil.

Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden and puffed and the pastry is crisp. Serve hot or warm. Serves 4–6

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



RICOTTA, CITRUS AND ALMOND CAKE

Strange as it sounds, I'm steering you towards a beer to sip with this magically moist cake: the **Rogue Voodoo Doughnut Lemon Chiffon Crueller Ale** (750ml, \$10). Just how you make a beer that tastes like 'chiffon' is beyond me – but in addition to malts and hops, a smorgasbord of ingredients like lemons, vanilla beans and marshmallows are used to conjure up a pillowy-soft, spritzy, lemon sponge-like concoction. Available from Super Liquor stores.

ROASTED TOMATOES AND MOZZARELLA WITH WARM SAGE & ANCHOVY DRESSING

I love the way good Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc has a whiff of tomato leaf on the nose, which makes it a great friend of any food where tomatoes are the hero. The **Thornbury Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2014** (\$14) is great here because it also has enough mid-palate richness to carry the creaminess of the cheese and the tangy dressing. To order visit www.thornbury.co.nz

GOATS CHEESE CROSTINI WITH FIG RELISH AND LEMON

In Italy you'd reach for a classically dry Pinot Grigio to pair with the piquancy of the goats cheese and the tang of the lemon – however I'm a huge fan of the quince, nashi and spice notes in the crisp and crunchy **Nevis Bluff Central Otago Pinot Gris 2012** (\$32.50). It works fabulously with the fig relish, too. To order visit www.nevisbluff.co.nz

MOZZARELLA WITH PICKLED GREEN TOMATO AND FENNEL SALAD

It's the splash of semillon and sauvignon gris in the **Te Mata Cape Crest Sauvignon 2013** (\$23) which gives it the perfect amount of floral and citrus complexity and soft anise notes to make for a winning match here. Hints of tomato leaf, almond and nettles on the nose and palate add to its deliciousness. To order visit www.temata.co.nz

TWO CHEESE AND OLIVE TART

There's a lot of flavour going on here with all the rosemary, onion, chilli, garlic and olives; so go for something on the crisp, cleansing side to counteract the creamy cheese element. I recommend the **Hot Water Brewing Co. Kauri Falls Pale Ale** (355ml can, \$5.55) because of its piney, herbaceous, hop bitterness and nutty, biscuity length. To order visit www.beercellar.co.nz

PROPS: Rocrete tile from Tile Space (www.tiles.co.nz). Background and plate from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz) used throughout. Cheese knife from Tessuti (shop.tessuti.co.nz). **Ricotta, Citrus and Almond Cake:** Stand and jug from Flotsam and Jetsam (www.flotsamandjetsam.co.nz). Plates from Tessuti. Bowl from Bob and Friends (www.bobandfriends.co.nz). Cutlery from The Props Department. **Roasted Tomatoes and Mozzarella:** Plates from Taylor Road (www.taylorroad.co.nz). Forks from The Props Department. **Goat's Cheese Crostini:** Board from Nest (www.nest-direct.co.nz). **Mozzarella with Pickled Green Tomato and Fennel Salad:** Platter from Japanese Lifestyle (www.japaneselifestyle.co.nz). Spoon and glasses from The Props Department. **Parmesan, Paprika and Rosemary Crackers:** Rack from The Props Department. Plate and knife from The Props Department. **Two Cheese and Olive Tart:** Marble board from Bob and Friends. Pizza cutter from The Props Department. All uncredited props stylist's own. Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz). Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com).



MADE *in* ITALY

What's more Italian than risotto, polenta and pasta? Following her recent travels through Italy, SARAH TUCK is inspired by these store cupboard staples.





CHICKEN AND LEEK RISOTTO
[recipe next page]



PAPPARDELLE
BOLOGNESE

Pappardelle Bolognese

Bolognese must be one of Italy's most famous pasta dishes and is best served as they do there with pappardelle (never spaghetti), as it has lots of surface area for the delicious sauce to coat. The key to this dish is long, slow cooking – and it is even better when prepared the day before.

2 tablespoons olive oil	¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
120 grams pancetta or streaky bacon, chopped finely	¾ cup red wine
1 onion, peeled and chopped finely	3 tablespoons tomato paste
1 stick celery, chopped finely	1 cup beef stock
1 carrot, chopped finely	2 tins cherry tomatoes in juice
⅛–¼ teaspoon chilli flakes	To serve
sea salt and ground pepper	two quantities of pasta dough (see recipe page 99), cut into pappardelle
4 cloves garlic, crushed	½ cup finely chopped parsley or basil leaves
500 grams beef mince	½ cup grated Parmesan
300 grams pork mince	
½ cup milk	

Heat the olive oil in a large heavy-based saucepan. Add the pancetta and cook over a medium heat for 3 minutes. Add the onion, celery, carrot and chilli flakes. Season with salt and pepper and cook for a further 15 minutes, stirring.

Add the garlic and both minces. Use a fork to break the meat down as much as possible to eliminate any big lumps. Cook for 5–8 minutes until the meat is no longer pink.

Add the milk and nutmeg and cook for 5 minutes, then stir through the red wine, tomato paste, beef stock and tomatoes. Cook uncovered over a low heat for 3 hours. *It will only need to be stirred every half hour.*

To serve: Cook the pasta in plenty of boiling salted water until al dente. Pile onto plates and top with the Bolognese sauce. Scatter over the Parmesan and chopped parsley.

Serves 6

Chicken and Leek Risotto

Chicken and leek is a wonderfully nurturing combination – add pancetta, garlic, thyme and Parmesan and you're onto a winner.

4 tablespoons olive oil	5 cloves garlic, crushed
30 grams butter	2¼ cups Arborio rice
150 grams finely chopped pancetta	⅓ cup white wine
850 grams boneless skin off chicken thighs, trimmed and halved	1 tablespoon finely chopped thyme leaves
sea salt and ground pepper	7–8 cups good quality chicken stock
Risotto	1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 large onion, chopped finely	35 grams butter
1 celery stick, chopped finely and leaves reserved for garnish	⅓ cup finely chopped parsley
1 large leek, trimmed, halved lengthways and sliced	To serve
	100 grams Taleggio or other soft-rind cheese, sliced

Chicken: Heat the olive oil and butter in a large, wide sauté pan and add the pancetta. Cook for 2–3 minutes then add the chicken and cook for a further 5 minutes, turning so that it is golden on all sides. Remove the chicken pieces and set aside, leaving the pancetta in the pan.

Risotto: Add the onion, celery and leek to the pancetta and cook for 10 minutes over a medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and add the rice. Cook for 3–4 minutes then add the wine and thyme.

Place the stock in a saucepan and heat gently. Once the rice has absorbed most of the wine add ⅓ cup of warm stock. Keep stirring, adding stock as it becomes absorbed, ensuring the rice never dries out. After 20 minutes add the chicken to the rice with the last of the stock and cook a further 5 minutes. *The risotto should be a bit wet, with the rice cooked but not mushy.* Remove from the heat and stir through the Parmesan, butter and parsley.

To serve: Ladle the risotto into shallow bowls. Scatter over chopped celery leaves and add a couple of slices of Taleggio. Serve with warm crusty rolls if desired. **Serves 6**



SPINACH, FETA
AND RICOTTA LASAGNE

Pasta

300 grams '00' flour	1 tablespoon
¼ teaspoon salt	polenta/cornmeal
	3 large eggs

Mix together the flour, salt and polenta then mound onto the bench. Make a large well in the centre of the flour. Whisk the eggs and pour into the well. Use a fork to continue whisking the eggs while incorporating flour from the inside edges of the well as you go, until half the flour mixture has been drawn in. Use your hands to bring in and combine the remaining flour, or as much of the flour as you need until the dough no longer feels wet and sticky.

Knead for 10 minutes until the dough is smooth, elastic and springy. Dust lightly with flour, wrap in plastic and leave to rest at room temperature for an hour.

When rested, unwrap the dough and knead lightly for a few minutes. Divide into 3 pieces and cover 2 pieces with plastic wrap while you roll out the first piece using a pasta machine.

Start at the widest setting and roll the pasta through 3–4 times, dusting with flour as you go and folding the pasta into thirds each time.

Then continue without folding, reducing the setting on your machine each time until you have a long, wide piece of pasta. *stop at the second-to-last setting, #6, on my Atlas machine.*

Repeat this process with the remaining pieces then cut into the desired shape or use for lasagna or tortellini. If not using long pasta immediately, spread on a tray, dust with a little flour, cover and store in the fridge for up to two hours before cooking.

Fresh pasta cooks much faster than dried and will only take a few minutes in a large pot of boiling salted water.

Makes 400 grams

PANTRY NOTE: '00' flour is a finely ground Italian high grade durum wheat flour, commonly used in pizza and pasta making. Available from specialty food stores.

COOK'S TIP: If you want to make filled pasta, add an extra egg yolk to the basic pasta recipe above, as it gives a softer dough.

Spinach, Feta and Ricotta Lasagne

I absolutely love this vegetarian lasagne, which somehow manages to be creamy, light, fresh and comforting – my perfect Sunday night dinner!

400 grams baby spinach, washed	Béchamel sauce
400 grams ricotta	40 grams butter
100 grams feta, crumbled	¼ cup flour
finely grated zest of 1 large lemon	2¼ cups milk
2 cloves garlic, crushed	¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
⅓ cup finely chopped parsley	1¼ cups grated Parmesan
¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg	2 bay leaves
sea salt and ground pepper	To assemble
	one quantity of pasta dough (see recipe opposite) cut into sheets to make two layers in a 28cm x 19cm baking dish

Steam the spinach until wilted but still vibrant green. Squeeze out any excess water and cool. Chop roughly and place in a bowl. Stir through the ricotta, feta, lemon zest, garlic, parsley and nutmeg.

Béchamel: Melt the butter in a small saucepan over a medium heat. Add the flour, whisk to a paste and add half the milk, continuing to whisk. Add the remaining milk and the nutmeg and season with salt and pepper. Continue to whisk over the heat until the sauce is thick and smooth. Stir through 1 cup of the Parmesan and add the bay leaves. Cool for half an hour and remove the bay leaves.

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

To assemble: Smooth 2 tablespoons of béchamel over the base of the baking dish. Line with pasta sheets. Spread half the spinach mixture over to form an even layer. Top with ¾ cup of béchamel and smooth out. Repeat with a second layer, finishing with a third layer of lasagne sheets. Top with the remaining béchamel and Parmesan and bake for 40 minutes. Rest for 5 minutes before serving. **Serves 6–8**

COOK'S TIP: Any left over pasta is great cut into strips and added to soup.

Microwave béchamel: For a quick microwave method for making béchamel sauce, melt the butter in a large microwave-proof jug. Add flour, whisk to a paste and add half the milk. Microwave 2 minutes on high, whisk and add remaining milk, salt and pepper and nutmeg. Microwave in minute bursts, whisking in between until thick and smooth. Stir through 1 cup of the Parmesan and bay leaves. Cool for half an hour and remove the bay leaves.



BEETROOT RISOTTO WITH
GORGONZOLA PICANTE
AND CRUMBLD WALNUTS

Beetroot Risotto with Gorgonzola Picante and Crumbled Walnuts

This is such a satisfying risotto. The combination of earthy sweet beetroot, fragrant thyme, pungent blue cheese and salted crumbly walnuts is irresistible!

4 medium beetroot, peeled and each cut into 6 wedges	4 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup olive oil	2¼ cups Arborio rice
2 tablespoons runny honey	½ cup red wine
sea salt and ground pepper	5 sprigs fresh thyme, leaves chopped finely
5 sprigs fresh thyme	7–8 cups good quality vegetable or chicken stock
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar	1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 tablespoon caster sugar	35 grams butter
½ cup walnuts, chopped roughly	To serve
Risotto	100 grams Gorgonzola picante or other crumbly blue cheese
1 large red onion, chopped finely	thyme sprigs for garnish

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Line a baking tray with tin foil. Place beetroot wedges in the centre and drizzle with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, honey, salt and pepper. Add the thyme sprigs. Fold tinfoil around the beetroot to make a closed parcel and cook for 55 minutes or until the beetroot can be pierced easily with a knife tip.

Set aside six wedges and blend the remaining beetroot in a food processor with the red wine vinegar. Heat the sugar in a sauté pan until it just starts to turn a pale golden colour. Add the walnuts and a sprinkling of sea salt and toss over heat until the walnuts are coated lightly in light amber caramel sugar. Set aside.

Risotto: Heat the remaining olive oil in a heavy-based saucepan and add the onion. Cook for 10 minutes over a medium heat. Add the garlic, cook for 2 minutes, season with salt and pepper and add the rice. Cook for 3–4 minutes then add the wine and chopped thyme.

Place the stock in a saucepan and heat gently. Once the rice has absorbed most of the wine, add about ⅔ cup of warm stock. Keep stirring, adding warm stock as it becomes absorbed, ensuring the rice never dries out. After 20 minutes add the beetroot purée and cook a further 5 minutes. *The rice should be cooked but not mushy.* Remove from the heat and stir through the Parmesan and butter.

To serve: Ladle the risotto into bowls. Halve the remaining beetroot wedges and place on top, crumble over Gorgonzola, scatter with walnuts and garnish with a sprig or two of thyme.
Serves 6

Fried Polenta with Creamy Mixed Mushrooms

This dish makes a beautiful weekend breakfast or lunch as well as a fabulous dinner any night of the week. Versatile and tasty, I absolutely love it.

Polenta	1 tablespoon finely chopped rosemary
300 grams polenta	sea salt and ground pepper
600ml chicken stock	4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
600ml milk	⅓ cup white wine
80 grams butter	½ cup cream
1 cup grated Parmesan	
Mushrooms	25cm x 34cm baking dish brushed lightly with 1 tablespoon olive oil
15 grams dried porcini mushrooms	
2 tablespoons olive oil	
40 grams butter	
850 grams mixed mushrooms, sliced (I used field and brown button)	

Pour 1 cup of boiling water over the porcini mushrooms and set aside.

Polenta: Place the stock and milk in a large saucepan and bring to a simmer. Remove from the heat and add the polenta in a steady stream, whisking to prevent lumps. Return to a low heat for 3–4 minutes and stir through the butter and Parmesan until very thick and smooth. Season to taste. Pour into the oiled baking dish. Place in the fridge to chill for 3 hours or up to 12 hours. Remove from the dish and cut into 12 rectangles. Place on a baking tray lined with baking paper and return to the fridge until ready to bake.

Preheat the oven to 210°C.

Bake polenta slices for 15 minutes.

Mushrooms: Heat the olive oil and half the butter in a large sauté pan. Fry the mixed mushrooms with the rosemary and a generous grind of salt and pepper over a medium high heat for five minutes. *Do this in two batches if the pan is too crowded.* Strain the porcini mushrooms, reserving the soaking liquid, and chop. Sieve the liquid to remove any grit and add to the pan with the chopped porcini, garlic, wine and cream. Cook for a further 6–7 minutes over a medium heat until two thirds of the liquid is absorbed. Stir through the remaining butter.

Serve two polenta pieces per person with mushrooms spooned over the top. **Serves 6**



SPAGHETTI ALLO
SCOGLIO

Spaghetti allo Scoglio

When my husband and I were lucky enough to visit Italy last year this was one of his go-to dishes, appearing as it did on almost every menu. The flavours are simple, yet carry so much depth. Don't forget crusty bread to mop up the juices!

500 grams spaghetti	250 grams squid, cut into tentacles and rings
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil	12 raw king prawns, unpeeled
6 cloves garlic, crushed	8 cherry tomatoes, quartered
1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon chilli flakes	1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/4 cup white wine	To serve
600 grams clams	1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped roughly
600 grams mussels, de-bearded and well scrubbed	

Cook the spaghetti in plenty of boiling salted water until al dente. Drain and reserve 2 tablespoons of the pasta water. Add a drizzle of olive oil to the pasta, stir through and sit the colander over the saucepan to keep warm.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large heavy-based saucepan. Add half the garlic and all the chilli flakes and cook over a medium heat for 2 minutes.

Add the wine, clams and mussels, then cover and cook for about 5 minutes until the shellfish have opened. *Discard any that don't open during this time.* Remove from the heat and set aside.

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large sauté pan and fry the remaining garlic for 1 minute. Add the prawns and cook for 3-4 minutes until pink, then add the squid and cook together for a further 2-3 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, clams and mussels with their cooking liquid, drained pasta and the reserved pasta water and toss together over the heat for a couple of minutes. Remove from the heat.

To serve: Stir through the chopped parsley. Divide the pasta and shellfish between plates. Season with sea salt and black pepper, drizzle over the remaining extra virgin olive oil and serve with crusty bread if desired. **Serves 6**

**FRIED POLENTA WITH
CREAMY MIXED MUSHROOMS**
[recipe previous page]



**PORK AND FENNEL
POLPETTE IN TOMATO SAUCE
ON CREAMY POLENTA**
[recipe next page]



Pork and Fennel Polpette in Tomato Sauce on Creamy Polenta

This dish was a hit with family and friends – the milk-soaked bread and ricotta keep the meatballs beautifully light while the toasted fennel seeds and lemon make them fresh and fragrant.

1.2 kilograms pork mince	olive oil spray
2 eggs, beaten lightly	½ cup grated mozzarella
4 slices thick white toast bread, crusts removed	Tomato sauce
½ cup milk	4 cups tomato passata
3 cloves garlic, peeled	2 teaspoons caster sugar
¾ cup ricotta	2 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ teaspoon dried chilli flakes	Polenta
2 teaspoons fennel seeds, toasted and ground	300 grams polenta
2 tablespoons chopped fennel or dill fronds	600ml chicken stock
finely grated zest 1 large lemon	600ml milk
sea salt and ground pepper	80 grams butter
	1 cup grated Parmesan
	To serve
	⅓ cup finely chopped parsley

Meatballs: Break the pork mince up in a large bowl and stir through the beaten eggs.

Tear the bread roughly and place in a food processor with the milk. While it soaks, add the garlic cloves, ricotta, chilli flakes, fennel seeds and fronds and lemon zest. Season well. Pulse until the mixture is just combined.

Add to the mince then mix until well combined. Roll into 30 golf ball-size meatballs and place in the fridge to chill for 20 minutes.

Tomato sauce: Put the passata, sugar and garlic in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer, stirring. Set aside. *You can make this element several days ahead and store, covered in the fridge.*

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

To cook: Line an oven tray with baking paper and place the meatballs on it, spaced evenly. Spray them lightly with olive oil. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove the meatballs from the oven.

Reduce the oven to 180°C.

Pour two thirds of the tomato sauce into a large ovenproof baking dish. Add the meatballs and spoon the remaining sauce over the meatballs and sprinkle with mozzarella. Bake for 20 minutes to heat through.

Polenta: Place the stock and milk in a large saucepan and bring to a simmer. Remove from the heat and add the polenta in a steady stream, whisking to prevent lumps. Return to a low heat for 3–4 minutes and stir through the butter and Parmesan until very thick and smooth. Season to taste.

To serve: Ladle the polenta onto plates and top with the meatballs and tomato sauce. Scatter over the chopped parsley. **Serves 6**

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



PAPPARDELLE BOLOGNESE

Go for a wine with a bit of age to serve with this classic family favourite. The Tironui Estate Hawke's bay Malbec Cabernet 2010 (\$28) is taking on delicious, seasoned leather, cigar box and Driza-Bone notes. A soft core of cured meats, spice, cocoa, prune and cedar shines through. To order visit www.nzwinecentre.co.nz

CHICKEN AND LEEK RISOTTO

This recipe uses two of my favourite things in a creamy risotto, so keep the indulgence going with a glass of my third favourite thing of the moment: the Mahi Alchemy Marlborough Chardonnay 2012 (\$39). The ripe, roasted stonefruit essence, grapefruit and creamy, caramelised toasty oak notes wrap around this risotto beautifully. To order visit www.mahiwine.co.nz

SPINACH, FETA AND RICOTTA LASAGNE

A creamy, light lasagne like this deserves to be in the spotlight, don't overwhelm it with the drink. I chose the Coopers Creek Bell Ringer Gisborne Albarino 2014 (\$22) because its delicate white florals, white pepper, apricot kernel and sunshine characters are an ultra-tasty combo. To order visit www.cooperscreek.co.nz

BEETROOT RISOTTO WITH GORGONZOLA PICANTE AND WALNUTS

This drool-inducing recipe is screaming out for a rich, rib-sticking red wine like the Te Mata Awatea 2013 (\$35). This standout blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot cabernet franc and petit verdot is impeccably balanced, bursting with dark fruits, roast beetroot, espresso and spicy oak. To order visit www.temata.co.nz

FRIED POLENTA WITH CREAMY MIXED MUSHROOMS

Try a rich, red that has a whiff of freshly-tilled earth wrapped around a core of cranberry, cherry and peppery intensity with these creamy, exotic mushrooms and baked polenta. The Greystone Waipara Pinot Noir 2013 (\$40) will do the job nicely indeed. To order visit www.greystonewines.co.nz

SPAGHETTI ALLO SCOGLIO

If you can tear yourself away from this sensational dish for a second, use it to enjoy the Gladstone Vineyard Rosé 2014 (\$25). Bursting with fresh, crisp melon, soft raspberry, spearmint leaf and yellow plum characters – it's rich enough for the sauce, yet subtle enough for the seafood. Visit www.gladstonevineyard.co.nz 09 447 3801.

PORK AND FENNEL POLPETTE IN TOMATO SAUCE ON POLENTA

Something ridiculously delicious happens when you combine the lush, spicy, red-fruited Brancott Estate Terroir Series Awatere Valley Pinot Noir 2013 (\$19) with these juicy, tomato-soaked meatballs. and polenta. The pinot brings a lifted, vibrancy to the whole dish. To order visit www.countdown.co.nz



Lumacconi

Tortiglioni

Rigatoni

SHAPE MATTERS

a guide to the pasta cuts of Italy

Do you know your spaghetti from your spaghettoni? Or which sauce to pair with pappardelle? If not, don't fret. We have the answers.

Spaghetti

Fettuccine

Rotelle

Stelline

Conchiglie



There are hundreds of different pasta shapes in Italy – from long thin strands to chunky moulded shapes. Each captures and carries sauce differently, so choosing the right cut for the dish is important. The general rule of thumb is that like goes with like: thin, delicate strands go with thinner, lighter sauces, while sturdy chunky shapes pair with heavier sauces and ragùs. Of course, it's not always that simple, which is why we've compiled this guide to shapes you're likely to find here in New Zealand.

1. MOULDED SHAPES

These shapes capture and hold sauce in their crevices and grooves, making them ideal for textured sauces that contain meat, vegetables or beans.

Conchiglie (con-KEEL-yay) – The name means “conch shells” in Italian, and this sturdy, hollow shape works with a variety of sauces. Large shells can be stuffed and baked, while smaller shells are a great addition to soups.

Farfalle (fah-FAHL-ay) – Although the name translates to “butterflies” in Italian, it is often referred to as “bow tie pasta”. Popular mostly for its charming shape, it's also thick enough to pair with a wide range of sauces.

Fusilli (foo-ZEE-lee) – Fusilli means “little spindles”, and has a corkscrew shape to which sauce easily adheres. It's commonly used in pasta salads or casseroles, or with thick meaty sauces.

Lumaconi (loo-mah-KOH-nee) – These ping pong ball-sized “snail shells” are usually served stuffed and baked.

Orecchiette (oh-reh-KYEH-tay) – The name for these tiny pasta bowls derives from “orecchio”, Italian for “ear”. They're a traditional cut from the Puglia region, and ideal for capturing thick chunky sauces.

Strozzapreti (stroh-tzuh-PRAY-tee) – The name translates to “priest strangler”, said to originate from a legend that a gluttonous priest once ate

the pasta so quickly he choked on it. The rolled strips are best served with a thick sauce or ragù that will cling to the twists. *Also in this category: Gigli, Cavatelli, Trofie, Rotini.*

2. TUBULAR PASTA

These work well with thick and chunky meat, tomato and vegetable sauces that contain larger pieces of ingredients, such as eggplant and capsicums. All of these shapes are perfect for using in baked pasta dishes.

Canelloni (cah-neh-LOE-nee) – With its wide tubular shape, cannelloni is nearly always filled with meat, seafood or vegetables and baked in the oven.

Gomiti (goh-MEE-tee) – Otherwise known as elbow macaroni, these curved tubes are extremely versatile and can be added to soups, baked, or topped with practically any sauce.

Penne (PEHN-neh) – A pantry staple, penne (which means both “feather” and “quill”) works with a huge array of sauces. The ridged version (penne rigate) holds thick sauces well, while smooth penne works well with oil-based sauces.

Rigatoni (rih-gah-TOE-nee) – A hugely popular cut in Southern and Central Italy, these hollow tubes are perfect for catching chunky bits of meat and vegetables, while sauce adheres to the ridges.

Ziti (ZEE-tee) – The name for these short tubes translates to “bridegrooms”



in Italian, and it is traditionally served at wedding banquets in Campania and Sicily. Also in this category: *Tortiglioni, Manicotti, Paccheri, Casarecce.*

3. LONG STRANDS

These marry best with olive oil, cream and simple tomato-based sauces and thinner meat and seafood sauces. When using vegetables with these pastas cut them into strings rather than cubes as this helps them blend into the sauce better.

Spaghetti (spah-GEH-tee) – As simple as pasta comes, spaghetti is traditionally served in Italy with thinner tomato or oil-based sauces (and not with bolognese, which tends to fall off the strands).

Bucatini (boo-kah-TEE-nee) – Similar to spaghetti but with a hole running through the middle, this sturdy round pasta can stand up to rich, creamy sauces.

Linguine (lin-GWEE-nay) – Italian for “little tongues”, linguine is a narrow, flat version of round spaghetti and pairs well with a variety of light sauces.

Capelli d'angelo – Otherwise known as “Angel Hair pasta”, these fine round strands work well with simple, delicate sauces, or as an addition to broths and soups.

Also in this category: Vermicelli and Spaghettoni.

4. LONG FLAT RIBBONS

These wide flat noodles are made by slicing a wider sheet of pasta into strips, and pair well with meat, cream-based and vegetable sauces.

Mafaldine (mah-fahl-DEE-nay) – Also known as Reginette, these ruffle-edged

ribbons made from semolina were named for the princess Mafalda di Savoia.

Tagliatelle (tal-ya-TELL-lay) – From the Italian “tagliare”, meaning “to cut”, these flat egg pasta ribbons are slightly wider than fettuccine, and pair just as well with bolognese, as with a creamy butter sauce.

Pappardelle (pah-pahr-DELL-lay) – Similar to Tagliatelle but broader, these luscious egg ribbons are often served with punchy ragùs from stronger flavoured meats like oxtail, duck or hare.

Fettuccine (feh-too-CHEE-nay) – The most famous pairing is with butter, cream and Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese in Fettuccine Alfredo, but it also works well with tomato and olive oil-based sauces. *Also in this category: Lasagna, Lasagnette, Sagnarelli.*

5. MINI SHAPES

These smaller pasta cuts, sometimes referred to as “soup pasta”, are often used in soups, salads and stews.

Orzo (OAR-tso) – The Italian word for “barley”, Orzo is a small pasta shaped like a grain of barley or rice, and made from semolina. It is often used in Italian soups like minestrone.

Fregula (FRAY-gyoo-luh) – Similar to Israeli couscous, this Sardinian pasta is hand-formed from semolina and water then toasted lightly, giving it a rustic look and nutty taste.

Stelline (steh-LEE-nay) – Italian for “starlets”, these tiny stars with holes in the centre are commonly served to children in Italy, usually in soups.

Also in this category: Ditalini, Anelli, Tripolini, Canestrini.

PASTA COOKING TIPS FROM CLAIRE ALDOUS

- Pasta needs to be cooked in plenty of boiling, well-salted water. It will only stick together if cooked in too little water or when added to water that is not yet boiling.
- Bring the water to a rolling boil and add the salt. Add the pasta and stir until it returns to the boil. The intense heat of the boiling water ‘sets’ the outside of the pasta and prevents it sticking together.
- Regulate the heat so the water doesn’t foam up and over the saucepan, but stays at a fast boil. If necessary, partially cover with a lid.
- If pasta is added to water before it is boiling, the starch starts to dissolve and the pasta will begin to break down and become mushy.
- Packet cooking times are only a guide. If you use them, start timing when the water returns to the boil.
- Pasta can overcook very quickly. It should be tender but still firm to the bite when you eat it. This is what Italians call ‘al dente’.
- Drain the pasta into a colander placed in your kitchen sink, reserving some of the cooking water if called for in the recipe.
- Don’t rinse the pasta if serving hot, as this will remove the starch that helps hold the sauce.
- Never mix different pasta types in one saucepan as they all have different cooking times.

EASY EVERYDAY

Simple meal solutions for any night of the week.



SPAGHETTI WITH
ROCKET, ALMONDS
AND TOMATOES

Spaghetti with Rocket, Almonds and Tomatoes

Simple, delicious and very quick – this is the ideal fast dinner.

500 grams spaghetti	2 medium tomatoes, chopped roughly
¼ cup olive oil	2 good handfuls rocket or baby spinach
zest and juice 1 lemon	1 handful basil leaves, ripped
3 cloves garlic, crushed	Parmesan for grating
2 medium zucchini, grated	sea salt and ground pepper
⅓ cup roasted skin-on almonds, chopped roughly	

Cook the spaghetti in a large saucepan of boiling salted water until al dente. Drain, reserving ½ a cup of the cooking water.

Return the pasta to the saucepan and add all the remaining ingredients, except the Parmesan. Season and toss everything together until combined, adding some of the reserved cooking water if the pasta is a little dry.

To serve: Divide between bowls and top with plenty of Parmesan and a drizzle of olive oil. **Serves 4**

Rump Steak with Potato and Herb Salad

This is my go-to potato salad recipe as it's fantastic with just about everything: fish, meat and cold cuts.

800 grams rump steak or cut of choice	1 tablespoon lemon juice
olive oil	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
sea salt and ground pepper	¼ cup sliced cornichons or gherkins
Salad	2 tablespoons capers
500 grams small waxy potatoes, scrubbed	2 spring onions, sliced thinly
3 tablespoons olive oil	1 cup picked parsley leaves

Salad: Cook the potatoes in boiling salted water until tender. Drain and run under cold water until cool enough to handle. Peel and cut into rough chunks. Whisk the oil, lemon juice and mustard in a large bowl and season well. Add the potatoes, along with all the remaining ingredients, and toss together.

Steak: Rub the steaks with a little oil and season. Cook in a hot sauté pan for 2–3 minutes each side or until done to your liking. *Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the steaks.* Cover lightly and rest for 3 minutes.

To serve: Place the steaks on plates and top with the salad. Serve with Dijon mustard if desired. **Serves 4**

Lemon and Basil Chicken with String Beans and Zucchini

Cooking the chicken with the skin on helps keep the meat moist and tender.

4 single chicken breasts, skin on	3 tablespoons olive oil
3 tablespoons olive oil	1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
2 cloves garlic, crushed	1 teaspoon wholegrain mustard
finely grated zest and 1 tablespoon lemon juice	1 clove garlic, crushed
¼ cup packed basil leaves, chopped finely	2 medium zucchini, julienned
sea salt and ground pepper	¼ cup thinly sliced sun-dried tomatoes
Salad	small handful basil leaves, ripped
200 grams green beans	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Salad: Push the beans through a bean slicer or slice thinly on the diagonal. Cook in boiling salted water until just tender. Drain and refresh in cold water.

Whisk the oil, vinegar, mustard and garlic in a large bowl and season. Add all the ingredients, including the beans, and toss together gently.

Chicken: Combine the oil, garlic, lemon zest and juice and the basil in a bowl and season. Rub all over the chicken then place the breasts in a roasting dish lined with baking paper, scraping in any basil oil left in the bowl. Roast for 25 minutes, basting occasionally, until cooked. *To test for doneness, the juices should run clear when a skewer is inserted into the thickest part of the breast.* Cover lightly and rest for 5 minutes.

To serve: Slice the chicken and arrange on plates. Top with the salad and spoon over the pan juices. **Serves 4**





RUMP STEAK WITH POTATO
AND HERB SALAD
[recipe previous page]

Florentine Pork Chops

This one pan dish has juicy pork chops nestled in a rich tomato sauce and topped with spinach and melting mozzarella. I served ours with crispy sautéed potatoes.

4 pork loin chops, skin removed	½ cup white wine, water or chicken stock
300 grams spinach, tough stalks removed	1 x 400 gram tin cherry tomatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil	1 cup tomato passata
sea salt and ground pepper	1 tablespoon basil pesto
1 onion, sliced thinly	1 cup grated mozzarella
2 cloves garlic, crushed	

Preheat the grill to its highest setting.

Put the spinach in a large heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water, turning to wilt. Drain and refresh in cold water then squeeze out all the excess liquid. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a large ovenproof sauté pan. Season the pork and cook for 3–4 minutes each side until just cooked through. *Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the pork.* Transfer to a plate and cover to keep warm. Don't wash the pan.

Add the onion and garlic to the pan and cook until soft, adding a splash of water if needed. Pour in the wine and let it bubble up for a couple of minutes then add the cherry tomatoes, passata and pesto. Simmer gently for 10 minutes.

Return the pork to the pan, along with any meat juices, and nestle the chops into the sauce. Simmer for 2 minutes then top each one with the spinach then the cheese.

Place under the grill until the cheese is golden and bubbling.

Serves 4



LEMON AND BASIL CHICKEN WITH STRING BEANS AND ZUCCHINI
[recipe previous page]

These *light little pillows* of potato are coated with glistening golden brown butter, crispy sage and toasted pine nuts. I served ours with a side of roasted diced pumpkin that can be cooked in the oven at the same time as the potatoes.



POTATO GNOCCHI
WITH SAGE BUTTER
AND PINE NUTS

Potato Gnocchi with Sage Butter and Pine Nuts

1 kilogram medium Agria potatoes, scrubbed	100 grams butter
½ cup rock salt	handful sage leaves
3 egg yolks	2 tablespoons pine nuts
½ teaspoon grated nutmeg	2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 cup plain flour plus extra for rolling	2 cloves garlic, crushed
sea salt and ground pepper	pinch chilli flakes
Sage butter	To serve
2 tablespoons olive oil	Parmesan for grating
	rocket (optional)
	cherry tomatoes (optional)

Prick the potatoes all over with a fork. Place the salt on a baking tray and nestle the potatoes into it. *This draws out their moisture.* Bake for 50 minutes or until tender when pierced with a skewer.

Scrape off any salt stuck to the skin then halve the potatoes lengthwise. Hold the hot potato in a tea towel in the palm of your hand and scoop out the flesh.

Press through a ricer or coarse sieve or mash well in a large bowl. Cool for 10 minutes then stir in the egg yolks and nutmeg and season very generously.

Sprinkle a little of the flour on the bench and spread the potato mixture on top. Sprinkle over the remaining flour and gently mix through with your fingers until the mixture comes together to make a smooth dough with no stickiness.

Divide the dough into 4 pieces and roll into logs about 30cm x 2cm. Cut each into 2cm pieces and place in a single layer on a baking tray dusted lightly with flour.

Butter: Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan and when hot add the butter then the sage leaves and pine nuts. Cook until the butter is lightly golden and smells nutty and the sage is crisp. Take off the heat and immediately add the lemon juice, garlic and chilli flakes. Stir and set aside.

To cook: Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Cook the gnocchi in batches, waiting until they rise to the top then cook for 1 minute more. *Taste one to check if it's cooked.* Lift the gnocchi out with a slotted spoon, add them to the pan containing the sage butter and turn gently to coat.

When all the gnocchi are cooked, place the sauté pan back over the heat and add a few tablespoons of the cooking water. *Shake the pan so the gnocchi don't stick.* Cook for another 2 minutes until they are all well coated with the sauce.

To serve: Serve immediately, topped with lashings of grated Parmesan and ground pepper. I also added rocket and cherry tomatoes. **Serves 4**

Spinach, Pea and Pesto Soup with Parmesan French Toast

I've served this hearty soup packed with greens with a delicious side of crispy golden, savoury French toast.

2 tablespoons olive oil	120 grams baby spinach
1 large leek, sliced thinly	2 tablespoons basil pesto
2 cloves garlic, crushed	sea salt and ground pepper
3 cups frozen peas	To serve
5 cups stock, use vegetable or chicken	sour cream
	Parmesan French toast (recipe below)

Heat the oil in a large sauté pan and add the leek and garlic. Season then cover and cook over a medium heat until very soft, stirring occasionally.

Add the peas and stock and bring to the boil. Cook for 5 minutes then add the spinach and stir until wilted. Remove from the heat.

Purée roughly with a stick blender or transfer half the soup to a food processor and blend until smooth, then tip back into the pot and stir to combine.

Stir in the pesto and season if needed.

To serve: Divide between bowls and top with a spoonful of sour cream and a grind of pepper. Accompany with the French toast if making. **Serves 4**

Parmesan French Toast


8 x 2cm thick slices good quality bread	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 cup milk	1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
2 eggs	sea salt and freshly ground pepper
1 teaspoon basil pesto	

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Whisk the milk, eggs, pesto and mustard in a shallow dish and season well.

Add the bread in batches until well soaked but not falling apart. Lift out, letting the excess liquid drip back into the dish and place the bread on a lined baking tray.

Sprinkle over half the Parmesan then turn the slices over. Sprinkle with the remaining Parmesan and bake for 6 minutes. Gently turn them over and bake for another 6 minutes until puffed and golden. Serve hot with the soup. **Makes 8 pieces**

A bowl of vibrant green soup, likely pea and spinach, topped with a poached egg and fresh herbs. The soup is served in a white bowl on a checkered placemat. In the background, there's a wooden tray with more croutons, a small brown ceramic teapot, and a black pepper mill. A piece of rope is visible in the bottom left corner.

**SPINACH, PEA AND PESTO
SOUP WITH PARMESAN
FRENCH TOAST**
[recipe previous page]

Pan-Fried Fish with Borlotti Beans and Capers

Use whatever fish is freshest and best on the day.

Beans

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, sliced thinly
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 x 400 gram tin borlotti beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 12 pitted green olives, quartered

- 2 tablespoons capers
- sea salt and ground pepper
- small handful mint or parsley leaves, ripped

Fish

- 800 grams firm white fish fillets
- ½ cup plain flour (optional)
- olive oil and butter for cooking
- good handful of salad leaves

Beans: Heat the oil in a sauté pan and cook the onion and garlic until tender.

Add all the remaining ingredients, except the herb, season and simmer gently for 5 minutes.

Fish: Dust the fish in flour if using and season well.

Heat a little oil and a knob of butter in a large sauté pan and cook on both sides until golden and just cooked through.

To serve: Stir the herb into the beans. Place the fish on plates and spoon over the beans. Top with a pile of salad, a grind of pepper and a drizzle of olive oil. **Serves 4**



PAN-FRIED FISH WITH
BORLOTTI BEANS AND CAPERS



BLUEBERRY AND
BANANA BREAD PUDDING
[recipe next page]

Blueberry and Banana Bread Pudding

Frozen raspberries or blackberries also work in this pudding and if you don't like banana, simply leave it out.

6 cups roughly torn bread	finely grated zest 1 lemon
1¼ cups milk	3 eggs
1 cup cream	1½ cups frozen blueberries
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	1 tablespoon caster sugar for sprinkling
½ teaspoon grated nutmeg	
1 very ripe medium banana	8 cup-capacity baking dish
⅓ cup caster sugar	

Preheat the oven to 170°C.

Heat the milk, cream, vanilla and nutmeg to just below boiling point.

Mash the banana to a paste and place in a large bowl. Add the sugar, zest and eggs and whisk together.

Slowly pour in the hot milk mixture, whisking constantly. Cool for 10 minutes then add the bread and turn gently so every piece is well coated in custard.

Tip half the pudding mixture into the baking dish and sprinkle over half the blueberries. Top with the remaining pudding and blueberries. Sprinkle over the sugar and bake for 35 minutes or until puffed and golden and the centre of the pudding is set.

To serve: Scoop into bowls and serve hot or warm with pouring cream if desired. **Serves 6**

COOK'S TIP: Use any type of bread for this recipe, from a plain white loaf to fruit loaf, croissants, brioche or French bread. It's better if the bread is a day old.

PROPS: Spaghetti with Rocket, Almonds and Tomatoes: Table from Trees (www.treesfurniture.co.nz) used throughout. Board and towel from The Foxes Den (www.thefoxesden.co.nz). Plate from Taylor Road (www.taylorroad.co.nz). Cutlery from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz). Glass from Trees. Tumbler from Freedom (www.freedomfurniture.co.nz). Monmouth Carafe from Tessuti (shop.tessuti.co.nz). **Florentine Pork Chops:** Board from The Props Department. Katherine Smyth bowl from Annex. AGA pan from FL Bone (www.flbone.co.nz). Glasses from The Foxes Den. Fabric from Republic (www.republichome.co.nz). **Rump Steak with Potato and Herb Salad:** Robert Walsh Knife from Taylor Road. Plate and napkin from Collect Living (www.collectliving.co.nz). Monmouth Glass from Tessuti. Pot from Republic. Bowl from Indie Home Collective (www.indiehomecollective.co.nz). Fork from The Props Department. **Lemon and Basil Chicken:** Plate from Freedom. Glass from The Foxes Den. Board from Citta (www.cittadesign.co.nz). Throw from Tessuti. Cutlery from The Props Department. **Potato Gnocchi with Sage Butter and Pine Nuts:** Glass from Bob & Friends (www.bobandfriends.co.nz). Black bowl from Nest. Bowl from Collected by Leanne Yare. Salt dish from Indie Home Collective. Fork and grater from The Props Department. **Spinach, Pea and Pesto Soup:** Bowl from Nest. Spoon from The Props Department. Mat from Country Road (www.countryroad.com.au). Heath Jug from Everyday Needs (www.everyday-needs.co.nz). Grinder from Country Road. Board from Collect Living (www.collectliving.com). **Panfried Fish with Borlotti Beans and Capers:** Marble board from Freedom. Glass from Trees. **Blueberry and Banana Bread Pudding:** Factory Ceramic bowls from Tessuti. Heath Ceramic Jug from Everyday Needs. Mat from Country Road. Spoons from The Props Department. All uncredited props are stylist's own. Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz). Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com).

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



SPAGHETTI WITH ROCKET, ALMONDS AND TOMATOES

This simple vegetarian pasta needs a light, fruity wine that won't overwhelm. The Anchorage Family Estate Nelson Pinot Rosé 2014 (\$18) with its sweet berry fruit, fresh herb and spice characters followed by tangy, taut acidity and a hint of 'chew' on the finish will do the trick nicely. To order phone 03 528 8350.

RUMP STEAK WITH POTATO AND HERB SALAD

With stunning colour, lifted aromas of boysenberry, plum, spices and concentrated plush red fruits the Matua Single Vineyard Hawke's Bay Merlot 2013 (\$60) is smooth, velvety and incredibly good with rare rump steak. To order visit www.centrecity.co.nz

LEMON AND BASIL CHICKEN WITH BEANS AND ZUCCHINI

The Urlar Select Parcels Sauvignon Blanc 2013 (\$30) is organic biodynamic beauty in a bottle. This is a multi-layered, lemony wine with racy acidity and a complex, textural finish that works beautifully with this dish. To order visit www.urlar.co.nz

FLORENTINE PORK CHOPS

It might be an Italian recipe, but I'm recommending Bordeaux all the way baby! The Pierre Lurton Ch. Marjosse Grand Vin de Bordeaux (\$26) is made mostly of merlot and oozes dark berries, cocoa, pepper and smoky notes. It's a magical match for these juicy chops. To order visit www.regionalwines.co.nz

POTATO GNOCCHI WITH SAGE BUTTER AND PINE NUTS

Once you try a super-hoppy beer with this lemony pine nut and sage sauce you'll never look back. The Liberty Brewing Co. Citra Jnr APA (500ml, \$10) is packed with citrus zest and pine-hefty hops and provides a smooth, juicy, cooling mouthfeel that slices through the carbs. To order visit www.finewinedelivery.co.nz

SPINACH PEA AND PESTO SOUP

This is comfort in a bowl, so wrap it up with a boombastic chardonnay. The Saint Clair Omark Reserve Marlborough Chardonnay 2013 (\$38) bursts with citrus and stonefruit notes and sails through the salty Parmesan with toasty, spicy intensity. To order visit www.saintclair.co.nz

PAN-FRIED FISH WITH BORLOTTI BEANS AND CAPERS

With pan-fried fish I'd usually be all over sauvignon blanc, but with capers, green olives, garlic and vinegar I can't think of anything nicer than the Wigram Brewing Munchner Dunkel (\$8, 500ml). Its rich caramelised malt tones under lifted citrus peel and nutty characters are beautiful with the creamy beans. For stockists visit www.wigrambrewing.co.nz

BLUEBERRY AND BANANA BREAD PUDDING

Banana can be tricky to match, until you try it with the Cocchi Barolo Chinato Vino Aromatizzato (\$74). A fortified wine made from 100% Nebbiolo grapes and infused with Calissaja Quinine tree bark and a blend of herbs and spices, this exotic tonic works wonders here. To order visit www.regionalwines.co.nz

MEAT *Matters*



An essential component for any recipe is to have the right cut of meat for the job. And as with all cooking, the best quality meat will result in a superior end result. Take the time to get to know your meat, one cut at a time.

THE CUT Round in shape, with some fat on, rump steak is juicy and tender with outstanding flavour.

Rump is at its best when it has been well hung and is great for grilling, frying, barbecues or stir-fries.

When purchasing rump look for marbling – little streaks of fat running through the meat. This melts when heated, helping the steak to baste itself from within as it cooks.

Look for the New Zealand Beef and Lamb Quality Mark to know you're buying the best New Zealand has to offer.

COOKING TIPS As with all steak, the secret is to sear it on a very high heat initially and then cook to your personal preference. Cook the meat from room temperature rather than directly out of the fridge.

A heavy-based sauté pan or skillet is ideal as they can be heated until very hot and will give a slightly sweet and crusty finish to the outside of the meat.

Lightly brush the steak with a little olive oil and season with sea salt and ground black pepper.

For a steak that is 22mm thick, cook it approximately 2 minutes each side for rare, 3–4 minutes each side for medium-rare and 4–6 minutes each side for medium.

Rest the steak for 2–3 minutes before serving to allow the juices to relax back into the meat.

TO SERVE Steaks can be topped with a variety of flavours:

For a spicy kick combine sour cream, chipotle sauce, sweet smoked paprika and freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

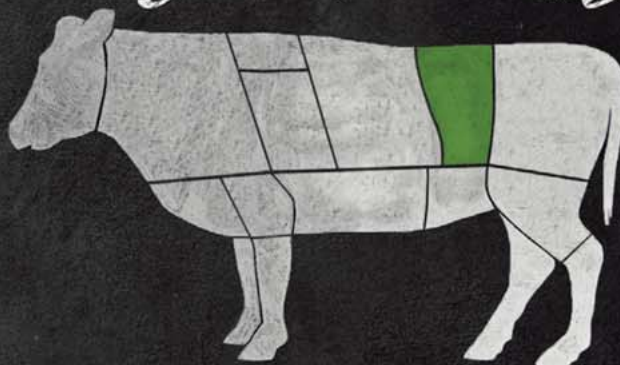
Top with a flavoured butter, such as:

Tarragon, garlic and mustard

Anchovy, lemon and chilli

Smear over a dollop of basil pesto or green chimichurri sauce after the steak has been cooked. It will mingle with the resting juices to make a fantastic quick sauce.

Rump steak



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Ligurian *love* affair

The sun shines brightly on the coastal Italian region of Liguria, where *history and food* are intertwined, as NICOLA EDMONDS discovers.



OPPOSITE PAGE:
Genoa's elegant Cavo
cafe has been serving
coffee since 1880.

THIS PAGE: The
picturesque village
of Pietrabruna; figs at
the Imperia Oneglia
Market.



Pietrabruna

An hour's drive from the French border, nestled high on the slopes of Monte Faudo, the beguiling village of Pietrabruna was first settled 1400 years ago and is surrounded by flower farms and whispering olive trees. Besides being the birthplace of '*stroschia*', a flat biscuity cake made with extra virgin olive oil and a splash of vermouth, the village is also known for its festivals devoted to the celebration of mushrooms, polenta and wild boar.

STAY

Franca Ranise hosts three lovely self-contained apartments within the village. Be sure to ask to see her olive oil making activities in the cellar of her home.
www.agriturismoranisefranca.com

VISIT

Museo dell'Olio: A small museum that does a wonderful job of explaining the relationship between the people of the Mediterranean and the ever-present olive tree.
www.museodellolivo.com

Imperia Oneglia Market (Rione di Oneglia)

— **Wednesday and Saturday:** An extensive outdoor market full of locally grown produce and artisan provisions typical of the area.

Braided to the sparkling blue hems of the Ligurian Sea, the Italian region of Liguria is a narrow ribbon of coast and mountains that wends 350 kilometres eastwards, from the border of France to the outskirts of Tuscany in the south.

The locals see their region as being one of two halves, which are named relative to the rising and setting of the sun: the *Rivieras di Levante* (to the east) and *Ponente* (to the west). At the cusp of the two, the legendary seaport city of Genoa reigns supreme and is, locals believe, where the sun shines brightest.

This abundant sun also nourishes a special intensity in the flavours of the region. From the patchwork of crops that bask in the tiny pockets of arable land, the famously frugal cooks of Liguria have developed great skill in coaxing much from relatively little.

Drawing also from the fresh fish and seafood at their doorstep and the prolific supply of fresh herbs that flourish in the mountain valleys, Ligurians like to refer to their style of cuisine as '*la Cucina Profumata*' (the Perfumed Kitchen).

The region is famous for the familiar emerald green presence of fresh-made pesto, found

in every market and *salumeria*, and for the delicately fragrant, almondy Ligurian olive oil. The treats that locals place on their 'must-try' lists though, tend to be as humble as they are delicious.

Such delicacies might include: *Sardenaira*, a simple pizza topped with a paste made from sardines, *torta verdure*, a savoury pie filled with fresh greens and cheese, or a plump, moist slice of focaccia (showcasing the aforementioned local oil), still warm from the oven.

Though more commercial than its eastern counterpart, the Riviera di Ponente is arguably the road less travelled by international tourists. Beyond the plentiful white sand beaches with their busy towns and resorts, tiny villages speckle the vertiginous heights above, perched sleepily amongst some of the best olive groves in Italy.

Affordable and friendly for those with just a few days to get a feel and taste for the spirit and flavour of Italy, or who are perhaps looking for a more easy-going entry route than the frantic scramble of the cities to the South, the Ponente is a wonderful introduction to beautiful Liguria.



OPPOSITE PAGE:
Grand buildings line the bustling streets of historic Genoa.

THIS PAGE
CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: Olive trees surround the village of Pietrabruna; catch of the day in Varazze; Graziella dell'Amerigo beside her bed and breakfast yacht, the Armegio; the Mare Hotel's pool offers a view to the hotel's private beach.



Savona

Despite its industrial first impressions, Savona offers visitors a beautiful medieval city centre to explore, the Pinacoteca Civica Savona (an important collection of religious paintings) and even whale spotting trips, which leave the white sand shores between July and September.

STAY

Mare Hotel: With its own private beach, this hotel is worth a visit even if only to experience the futuristic beach tableaux in the foyer and plum purple décor theme in the sumptuous superior guest rooms. www.marehotel.it

EAT

A Spurcacciuna: This excellent restaurant adjoining the Hotel Mare showcases a modern approach to fresh local seafood. Dishes are arranged and served with as much thought to their delicate artistry as to the myriad flavours on the plate. Dine alfresco beneath an elegant pergola, open to views of the stars and the soft sounds of the sea, just a stone's throw beyond.

Varazze

The bustling town of Varazze has a busy fishing fleet in attendance and the winding *budello* (backstreet alleyways) are a great place to visit the cheerful fishmongers who excel in showing off the local catch.

EAT

Ristorante Bri: Rosella and Luigi prepare authentic family recipes with the lightest touch. Try lightly crumbed baby octopus so tender that they disappear in a mouthful, salty anchovies delicately split and stuffed with a filling of egg, bread and cheese, or Branzino sea bass baked whole on a bed of salt and plated at your table in plump white flakes.

STAY

Sardinian-born Graziella dell'Amerigo offers bed and breakfast aboard her beautifully restored motor-yacht, Amerigo. Brunch is served among the potted petunias on the top deck while Fragoletta the Yorkshire terrier keeps watch from her perch beside the gangway. www.imbarcazioneamerigo.com







Genoa

Buffed clean of much of its shady reputation during the last few years, the city once known as 'La Superba' still retains just the right blend of grit and intrigue alongside the grandly beautiful architecture, both modern and classical, of which the locals are so justifiably proud.

Shadowy webs of *caruggi*, the city's famously dark and almost claustrophobically narrow alleyways, funnel to and fro across the city centre, opening out into wide bright avenues of magnificent palazzo and depositing pedestrians at the bustling and increasingly gentrified Porto Antico harbour-front.

The Genovese are also known for lavishing much love upon their city's fabulous food scene. Chic bars and eateries bump elbows with the historic and atmospheric *caffè* sprinkled throughout the city centre.

Legendary for its unpretentious *friggitoria*; the Ligurian equivalent of 'fry shops' are said to leave all other fast food but a pale shadow in comparison.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Cavo's stylish exterior; food is never far away in the streets of Genoa; locals are immensely proud of Genoa's grandly beautiful architecture.



Focaccia is available, fresh-baked, at all hours along with the golden savoury rounds of *farinata* – fried crepes made from chickpea flour.

VISIT

Mercato Orientale (The Oriental Market):

The huge central market of Genoa takes its name from its position; built just to the east of the city walls in 1899. To avoid the crowds wander with the locals early in the week. www.mercatoorientale.org/en

Cavo: Serving pastries, coffee and liquor since 1880, this elegant café is a wonderful place to see and be seen. For a special pick-me-up, ask for a *café corretto*, which comes with a shot of liqueur. www.cavo.it/marescotti

EAT

Friggitoria (fry shops): The choices are endless, but these two are an authentic

sample from which to gain a taste for further Friggitoria exploration of your own.

Antica Sciamadda – Via San Giorgio 14, Genoa; **Friggitoria Carega** – Via Sottoripa, 113r, Genoa

Maxela: For those feeling meat-deprived, this beef-only steakhouse also proudly showcases its butchery within the urbanly cool restaurant surrounds. www.maxela.it

Eataly: Enjoy wrap-around views of the ancient harbour from the gourmet seafood restaurant Il Marin, tucked within Genoa's outlet of this upmarket food store, then stock up on specialist food supplies. ○

NB: In Genoa many shops and eateries are closed on Mondays. Blue or black numbers painted on buildings indicate residences, while those in red are for businesses.

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Introducing your kitchen saviour - the Bosch Series 8 Oven. The PerfectRoast meat probe measures the core temperature of meat, poultry and fish ensuring the most accurate cooking possible for that perfect medium-rare fillet. The PerfectBake sensor measures the moisture content in the oven to determine when your delicious baked goods are ready, while the 4D hot air system evenly distributes heat throughout the oven. Finally, The Bosch DishAssist takes the guess work out of cooking. Just choose your dish and it instantly selects the best temperature and cooking time. For further information visit: www.bosch-home.co.nz or phone 0800 807 723.



THE POWER OF THREE

The latest addition to the 180 Degree range of Lavosh crackers is charged with the power of three. Featuring a super seed combination of chia, poppy and sesame seeds, the new Lavosh crackers are not only delicious, but good for you too. Made using the finest ingredients, Lavosh Chia, Poppy and Sesame crackers are 100 per cent natural and dairy free. Perfect with dips, pate and cheese or enjoy simply as a snack any time of day. Available in leading supermarkets nationwide. For more, visit www.180degrees.co.nz



STATEMENT OF STYLE

Ponder the proverbial question "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" with this set of stylish porcelain egg cups by Keith Brymer Jones. The British ceramic designer creates unique pieces which are bold and simple, stylish yet traditional. Each egg cup features a coloured word imprint recalling a retro typewriter font. The Word range marries classic whiteware with an edgy 'cool Britannia' twist. For stockist enquiries visit www.domag.co.nz



New fizz on the block

Riccadonna Prosecco has just landed on New Zealand shores. Delicate and pleasantly dry, this authentic Italian sparkling wine is taking the world by storm. Prosecco shows great versatility. It is often sipped as an aperitif, or mixed in classic cocktails such as the world-famous Bellini - invented in the 1930s and still considered one of the best sparkling cocktails today. Prosecco is also a key ingredient for low-alcohol options, like the eye-catching Aperol Spritzer. Simply mix Aperol, soda water, fresh orange and Riccadonna Prosecco. We can't get enough of its delicate citrus notes, and its stylish bottle. A must try - salute!

WINDOW SHOPPING



Miele K 30000 Fully Integrated Refrigeration Range

Showcasing state-of-the-art technology, the new Miele K 30000 Fully-Integrated Refrigeration Range is not only stylish, but equipped with extraordinary features to ensure the very best food storage conditions. The range comprises a choice of fridge, freezer and fridge/freezer models which can be installed individually or side-by-side to perfectly match Miele's Generation 6000 built-in cooking appliances. Inside, all K 30000 functions can be quickly accessed via sleek Miele touch controls. These user interfaces also complement other Miele Generation 6000 built-in appliances for perfect kitchen design harmony. From \$3,699 Visit www.miele.co.nz



CIDER WITH A DIFFERENCE

Cider is like wine – really it is. As is the case with wine, you need superb fruit to achieve greatness. The team behind Paynter's Cider have been growing fruit in New Zealand since the 1860's, so it's no surprise that their first commercial cider won the 'Best Cider' trophy at the 2014 Fruit Wine and Cider Makers Awards. For those that think that cider is sweet, bland and unsophisticated try a glass of Paynter's Cider and think again. Order online at www.paynterscider.co.nz



La dolce vita

Since 1932, Sanpellegrino Sparkling Fruit Beverages have been offering a taste of the sweet life. Rich in citrus juice, the delightful blend of natural flavours will transport you to the shade of an orange grove in sunny southern Italy. Available from selected supermarkets in four flavours: Aranciata (Orange), Aranciata Rossa (Blood Orange), Limonata (Lemon) and Pompelmo (Grapefruit). www.sanpellegrinofruitbeverages.com



Cream of the crop

Tatua's crème de la crème range of Specialty Creams are masterfully crafted for either sweet or savoury dishes. Best of all, they're gluten free and long life, so you can keep them on hand for when culinary inspiration strikes. Available from the chilled section at your local supermarket. RRP \$5.29 www.tatua.com



Perfect Harmony

Harmony is New Zealand's only certified free range (not free farmed, which is different) pork and bacon brand. It's also New Zealand's leading organic beef and lamb brand with a wide range of sausages and steaks for every season. Harmony works directly with farmers throughout New Zealand to ensure they meet all animal welfare needs and are SPCA accredited. Available at New World supermarkets, Farro Fresh and Neat Meat. www.harmony.co.nz



CHOP IT UP

If you've been waiting to get your hands on a coveted KitchenAid Stand Mixer this Mother's Day is the perfect time. KitchenAid are giving away a FREE Food Chopper valued at \$169 with every Stand Mixer purchased. The Artisan Food Chopper is great for quick, small jobs such as dressings, sauces and single-serve meals. The one touch operation allows you to chop or purée and includes a chute for adding liquid ingredients as you go. When combined with the incredible capabilities of the KitchenAid Stand Mixer, the possibilities are almost unlimited. Offer valid while stocks last. www.kitchenaid.co.nz

*Are you
getting
enough?*

WORLD IRON AWARENESS WEEK
13-19 APRIL 2015

WORLD IRON AWARENESS WEEK

Do you often feel tired, irritable, sensitive to the cold and have difficulty concentrating? You could be short on iron. Simple adjustments to your diet, such as eating more New Zealand beef and lamb, will increase iron intake. Visit www.ironweek.co.nz for more information.



APPLE OF MY EYE

Ambrosia apples are a miracle of nature. The original tree was found as a chance seedling growing in an orchard. When the grower noticed fruit pickers ate all the Ambrosia while ignoring his other prize varieties he realised there was something special about it. The Yummy Fruit Company has now planted 100,000 Ambrosia trees in Hawke's Bay. www.yummyfruit.co.nz

KITCHEN NOTES

NOTES FOR COOKS

To ensure successful results in cooking, we recommend you invest in accurate measuring tools – measuring cups and spoons and a measuring jug are essential and electronic scales are particularly useful as they weigh accurately in both imperial and metric.

Always follow one set of measures in a recipe. Do not mix them up.

Dish uses:

A fan forced oven unless otherwise specified

Large eggs (No.7)

Level spoons and cup measurements

Liquids are always measured in a jug and dry ingredients in measuring cups.

NB: One tablespoon is 15ml
(the Australian tablespoon is 20ml)

USEFUL INGREDIENT EQUIVALENTS

Breadcrumbs

1 cup fresh = 50 grams

1 cup dried = 115 grams

Butter

1 (American) stick = 100 grams

1 cup = 225 grams

2 tablespoons = 30 grams

Cheese

1 cup grated tasty = 115 grams

1 cup Parmesan = 150 grams

Egg Whites

Large (No. 7) egg white = 30 grams

Flour

1 level measuring cup = 150 grams

Gelatine

3 teaspoons granulated/3 leaves (gold grade) will set 500mls/2 cups liquid to a light jelly.

1 rounded tablespoon granulated/4–5 leaves (gold grade) will set 500mls/2 cups liquid to a firm jelly.

Leaf gelatine comes in varying grades. It is wise to check the setting properties of the leaf gelatine you buy before use.

Honey, Golden Syrup

1 cup = 350 grams

Onions

1 x 115 gram onion = 1 cup chopped

Rice

1 cup uncooked rice = 200 grams

1 cup cooked = 165 grams

Sugar

1 cup caster and granulated = 225 grams

1 cup brown sugar = 200 grams

1 cup icing sugar = 125 grams

Spinach

650 grams spinach leaves = ¾ cup purée

Yeast

2 tablespoons fresh (compressed)
= 1 tablespoon dried (granulated)

OVEN TEMPERATURES

225° Fahrenheit = 110° Celsius = cool oven

300° Fahrenheit = 150° Celsius = very low oven

350° Fahrenheit = 180° Celsius = moderate oven

400° Fahrenheit = 200° Celsius = hot oven

450° Fahrenheit = 230° Celsius = very hot oven

VOLUME

1 level teaspoon = 5mls

1 level tablespoon = 15mls

1 oz/fl oz = 28.35 grams/mls

1 pound = 450 grams

1 cup liquid = 250mls

1 pint = 600mls

1 litre = 1000mls

WEIGHT

10 grams = ¼oz

15 grams = ½oz

25 grams = 1oz (actual 28.35 grams)

450 grams = 1 pound

1 kilogram = 2¼ pounds

LENGTH

1cm = ½ inch

2.5cm = 1 inch

12cm = 4½ inches

20cm = 8 inches

24cm = 9½ inches

30cm = 12 inches

FOOD NAME EQUIVALENTS

We all use cookbooks and magazines from around the world. These are some of the more common ingredients which have differing names.

baking paper	parchment paper/ silicone paper
beetroot	beets
cannellini beans	white kidney bean
capsicum	bell pepper/ sweet pepper
celeriac	celery root
coriander	cilantro
cream	heavy cream
eggplant	aubergine
fillet (as in meat)	tenderloin
golden syrup	dark corn syrup
hapuka	proper
icing sugar	confectioners sugar
plain flour	standard/pure flour
prawn	jumbo shrimp
rocket	rocquette/arugula
scallopini	pattypan squash
spring onions	green onions
zucchini	courgettes

USEFUL TECHNIQUES

Bake blind: line a prepared pastry case with baking paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. The beans support the pastry as it cooks. Bake in a preheated 190°C – 200°C oven for up to 20 minutes before removing the paper and weights. The shell should now have taken form. Return to the oven for the time specified in the recipe.

Julienne: this term refers to food, often vegetables, that are sliced into thin matchsticks. This is most easily done using a mandolin but can also be done by hand. First cut into 3mm (⅛-inch) thick slices. Stack the slices and cut into 3mm (⅛-inch) thick strips. Cut into desired length.

Remove pin bones from salmon: fillets almost always contain small pin bones. To remove them, first run your finger down the centre of the fillet, pushing down gently so the bones pop out slightly as they are located. Using a pair of tweezers or needle-nosed pliers, pull out each bone carefully, with the grain to avoid tearing the flesh.

Roast capsicums: place the capsicum on a tray and roast in a pre-heated 200°C oven until tender but not collapsing. When cool, peel and remove the seeds.

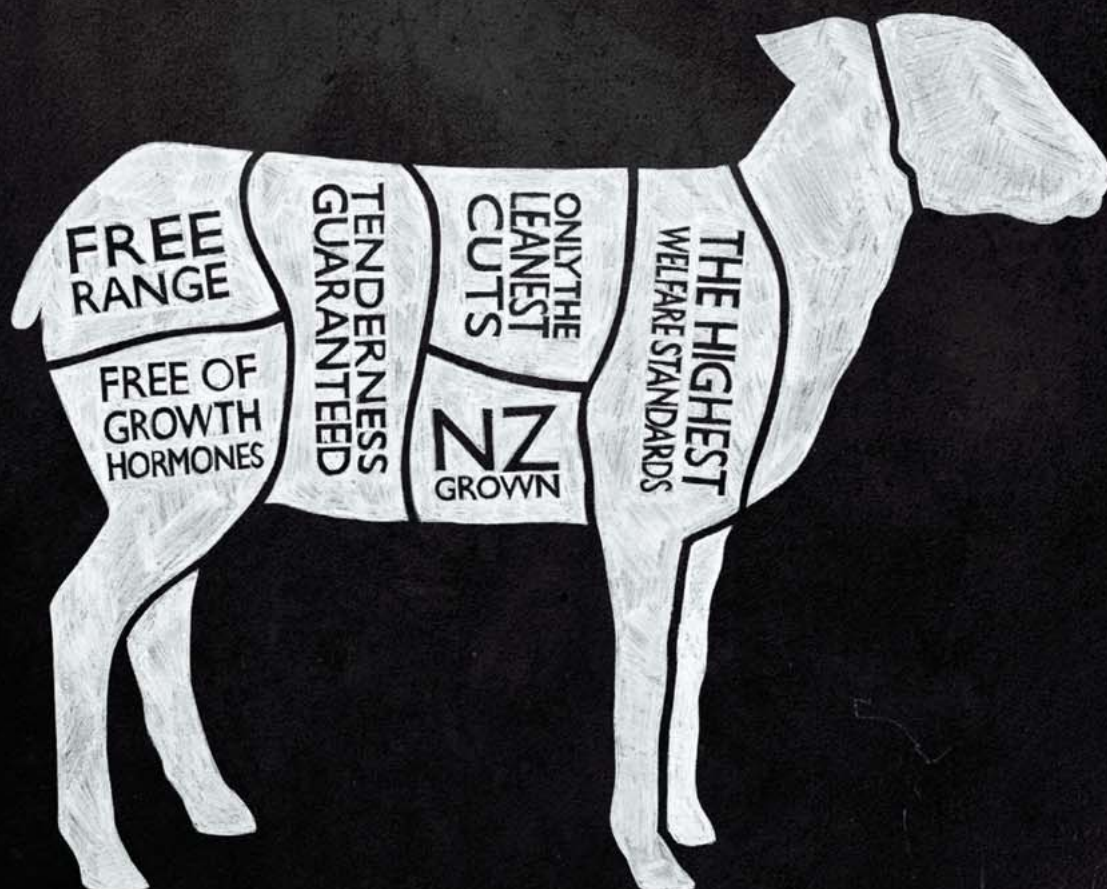
Roast nuts: spread the nuts out in a single layer on a shallow baking pan and place in a preheated 180°C oven. Shake the pan every few minutes until the nuts are golden. Watch carefully as the nuts can become too brown very quickly. Remove and tip into another dish to cool.

Sterilise bottles and jars: put jars or bottles and their lids through a hot cycle of the dishwasher Alternatively, wash in hot soapy water and rinse well. Place them on an oven tray in a cold oven. Turn the heat to 120°C and leave for 30 minutes.

Toast and grind seeds and spices: heat a small dry pan over a medium heat. Add the spice and toss until fragrant and just starting to darken in colour. Be very careful not to burn as this will make them bitter. Toast one spice at a time rather than combining, as each spice will take a different time to toast. Tip out onto a plate and cool. Grind in a mortar and pestle or a small coffee grinder, reserved for the purpose.



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Italian thing*

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